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PREFATORY NOTE

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My friend, Dr. L. C. Purser, Senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, has kindly read the proofs and given me the benefit of his acute and learned criticism.

JOHN DUBLIN.

August 1917.

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CHAPTER I

THE DESCENT INTO HADES AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

(A STUDY OF 1 PETER III. 19 ff.)

1. IN Hebrew and early Christian cosmogonies, the earth was conceived as a disk surrounded by, and resting upon, underlying waters of vast extent and depth, which were called *těhôm* or the *abyss*.¹ God had 'spread forth the earth above the waters'² at the beginning; He had 'founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods.'³ From these 'waters under the earth'⁴ all springs and rivers welled up. Fertilising streams are called 'the blessings of the deep that coucheth beneath.'⁵ Or, as the Book of Enoch has it, 'The earth was founded upon the water, and from the secret recesses of the mountains come beautiful waters from the creation of the world and unto eternity.'⁶ And, according to the Priests' Code, the devastation of Noah's flood was caused not only by 'the windows of heaven being opened,' but by the

¹ Cf. Deut. xxxiii. 13; Prov. iii. 20; viii. 24; Amos vii. 4.

² Ps. cxxxvi. 6.

³ Ps. xxiv. 2.

⁴ Exod. xx. 4.

⁵ Gen. xlix. 25.

⁶ Enoch lxix. 17.

bursting forth of the 'fountains of the great deep' (*αἱ πηγαὶ τῆς ἀβύσσου*).¹ This idea continually reappears. For example, in the Book of Enoch we read: 'He shewed me the angels of punishment who are prepared to come and let loose all the powers of the waters which are beneath in the earth in order to bring judgment and destruction on all who live on the earth.'² That is, the Flood was an eruption of the abysmal waters, and its subsidence is described in the Book of Jubilees³ by saying that 'the mouths of the abysses of the earth were opened, and the water began to descend into the deep below.' We gather, then, from these passages that the abysmal waters were counted mysterious and terrible, as agents of destruction.

2. Next, it appears that these 'depths' are the dwelling-place of great monsters, who are dangerous to men, and whom none but God can control.⁴ And in the New Testament the 'Abyss' is regarded as the home of demons and evil spirits. Thus the devils in Luke viii. 31 besought Christ 'that He would not command them to depart into the Abyss.' This idea lingered long. 'Quae est abyssus?' Origen asks in reference to this last passage, and he answers: 'Illa nimirum in qua erit diabolus et angeli ejus.' And, again, com-

¹ Gen. vii. 11.

² Enoch lxvi. 1; cp. lxxxix. 3.

³ v. 29; cf. vi. 26.

⁴ Gen. i. 21; 2 Esdr. vi. 52.

menting on Genesis i. 2, he says of the 'waters under the earth': 'Ea aqua quae subtus est, id est, aqua abyssi, in qua tenebrae esse dicuntur, in qua princeps hujus mundi et adversarius draco et angeli ejus habitant.' ¹

So, too, the Beast of the Apocalypse came out of the Abyss ²; and it is noteworthy that he arose from the sea,³ which is, as it were, the surface of the Abyss. It is represented as entered by a well (*φρέαρ*) the mouth of which is kept under lock and key.⁴

3. We now recall the idea, widespread in the ancient literature of both Semites and Greeks, that Hades or the Underworld is connected with the earth by a waterway. Thus, according to Dr. Charles, 'Aralû, the Babylonian Sheol, is a mighty palace, situated under the earth, in the depths of the mountain Aralû. It is approached by the great Ocean into which the sun dips at evening.' ⁵ And Dr. Cheyne, commenting on Psalm xviii. 4, 'the floods of Sheol,' traces the expression to Babylonian mythology. 'Even if, O Gilgames, thou didst cross the sea, what wouldest thou do on arriving at the waters of death?' ⁶ In Greek

¹ Lommatzsch, viii. 106, 108.

² Rev. xi. 7; xvii. 8.

³ Rev. xiii. 1.

⁴ Rev. ix. 1.

⁵ *Eschatology*, p. 34 n.

⁶ Cheyne, *The Book of Psalms*, i. 67, citing Jeremias' *Vorstellungen*, p. 86 f.

mythology, it was commonly held in like manner that the Ocean separated the visible world from Hades, and that it must first be passed by those journeying into the unseen.¹

4. Similarly, it was a Jewish belief that of the three gates to the Underworld of punishment, one was a gate in the *sea*,² this being justified by an appeal to the opening words of Jonah's prayer: 'From the belly of hell (ἐκ κοιλίας ᾗδου) I cried.'³ The whale's belly was, as it were, the entrance to Hades. Thus the saying that 'As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth'⁴ had a special suggestiveness to the early readers of St. Matthew's Gospel. The parallel is not only in the 'three days and three nights'; for behind the saying is the conception that the place of Jonah's terror was the vestibule of Hades.

Irenaeus has something more to say about the type of Jonah, which, although far-fetched, is apposite here. He has been speaking of God's

¹ Cf. *Odyssey*, x. 508 f., xi. 21 f.

² The other gates were in *Jerusalem* (Isa. xxxi. 9), and in the *wilderness*, where the earth opened and swallowed up Korah's company, κατέβησαν αὐτοὶ καὶ ὅσα ἐστὶν αὐτῶν ζῶντα εἰς ᾗδου (Num. xvi. 33). See Lightfoot (*Horae Hebraicae*, ii. 110), who gives the Talmudic reference *Bab. Erubhin*, 19 a.

³ Jonah ii. 2.

⁴ Matt. xii. 40; see p. 155 *infra*.

longsuffering in dealing with Jonah, and he proceeds : ' Sic et ab initio fuit patiens Deus hominem absorberi a magno ceto, qui fuit auctor praevaricationis, non ut absorptus in totum periret, sed praestruens et praeparans adinventionem salutis, quae facta est a Verbo per signum Jonae.' ¹ That is, Irenaeus regards the whale or marine monster as the type of Satan, who would swallow up mankind. Here we have the idea of the Spirit of Evil as resident in 'the deep,' an idea deep-rooted in Semitic thought, and behind the Dragon myth which has been so fully (perhaps excessively) elaborated by Gunkel in his *Schöpfung und Chaos*.

5. What has been said is sufficient to illustrate the familiar belief of antiquity that the Abyss or Hades is a place approached by deep waters, the abode of mysterious powers of evil. This is the abode of departed souls. 'They that are deceased tremble, beneath the waters and the inhabitants thereof.' ² It was into 'the Abyss' that Christ went after His Passion, according to St. Paul.³

The ancient systems of cosmogony must not be expected to be complete and consistent at every point, and probably the situation of Hades was not very exactly conceived. Passages occur which would suggest that Sheol was in the bosom of the

¹ *Haer.* iii. 21, 1.

² Job xxvi. 5.

³ Rom. x. 7.

solid earth itself,¹ although they are not explicit. This conception was formulated in the second century by Tertullian. He says that he does not hold with Plato that the lower regions are a kind of open cesspool, but rather that they are like a deep hidden recess in the bowels of the earth, superimposed on the abysses which are yet lower down.² And in like manner, in the fourth century, Hilary distinguishes the abode of the dead, which is *intra terram*, from the abode of spiritual beings who live *infra terram*, there being many inhabitants of this 'infernal region and vast abyss.'³

It is doubtful, however, if this doctrine that Sheol was actually within the bowels of the solid earth⁴ is implied in the Biblical literature; and in any case it is not necessary for my present purpose to inquire closely into so curious a point.⁵ What I wish to bring out is that, so far as the situation of Sheol or Hades was pictured in the imagination it was held by the Jews and early Christians to be

¹ Cf. Ps. lxiii. 9; lxxi. 20; Ezek. xxvi. 20.

² Nobis inferi non nuda cavositas nec subdivalis aliqua mundi sentina creduntur, sed in fossa terrae et in alto vastitas et in ipsis visceribus ejus abstrusa profunditas, siquidem Christo in corde terrae triduum mortis legimus expunctum, id est in recesso intimo et interno et ex ipsa terra operto et intra ipsam clauso et inferioribus adhuc abyssis superstructo (*De Anima*, 55).

³ In Ps. ii. 32.

⁴ See for a diagram the article 'Cosmogony' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, i. 503.

⁵ It is elaborately discussed by Ussher, *Works*, iii. 377 f.

connected with the abysmal waters under the earth; that all rivers and springs welled up from, and communicated with, this place of darkness and dread; and that it was the dwelling-place of evil spirits. Such conceptions were not, of course, only of Semitic origin. The belief, *e.g.*, that wells are the haunts of spirits, malignant or propitious, is world-wide, and is found in all folklore.

6. I have noted elsewhere¹ the influence which the idea that rivers and wells communicate with the home of evil spirits has had upon the baptismal rites of the early Church. The connexion of exorcism with baptism is probably related to this. But more particularly the curious fact should be noticed that the Eastern baptismal rituals all imply the belief that the waters of Jordan were terrified when Christ entered them for baptism. In them are recited from the Psalms such phrases as the following: 'The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee and they were afraid; the depths also trembled'²; or 'The sea saw it and fled; Jordan was driven back'³; or 'The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.'⁴ These phrases

¹ *The Odes of Solomon* (Cambridge, 1912), p. 33 f.

² Ps. lxxvii. 16, εἶδοσάν σε ὕδατα καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν καὶ ἐταράχθησαν ἄβυσσοι. Also quoted in one of Ephraim's Hymns about Baptism (*Epiph. Hymns*, xiv. 31).

³ Ps. cxiv. 2. Hippolytus (*De Theoph.* 3) quotes this in reference to the Baptism of Christ.

⁴ Ps. xxix. 3.

were supposed to be prophetic of the fear inspired by the Coming of Christ to the Jordan. Indeed, this notion is not peculiar to the rituals of baptism. It is also found in Christian art, as Mr. C. F. Rogers has shown.¹ In more than one representation of the baptism of Christ, Jordan is depicted allegorically in the water below as starting away in astonished fear.²

Further, to primitive Christian thought, demons and evil spirits were scared away at Christ's baptism, and at the baptism of all Christians. Origen, commenting on the words cited above from Psalm lxxvii. 16, ἐταράχθησαν ἄβυσσοι, explains them in his allegorical manner, thus: αἱ ἄβυσσοι τὰς καταχθονίους δυνάμεις δηλοῦσιν, αἵτινες ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ Χριστοῦ ἐταράχθησαν, i.e. the powers of the underworld were terrified at the presence of Christ in the water. And there is a prayer in more than one baptismal *Ordo* that the demon of darkness may be put to flight, 'neque delitescat in aquis istis tenebrosus demon.'³

This conception of the mysterious origin of rivers and wells in the unseen 'deeps' probably lies

¹ 'Baptism and Christian Archaeology' in *Studia Bibl. et Eccl.* v. 4, p. 290 f.

² See also the illustrations in Cabrol's *Dict. d'Archéologie Chrétienne*, s.v. 'Baptême de Jésus,' col. 369.

³ See Denzinger, *Rit. Orient.* i. 306, 275.

behind the early practice of baptizing in *running* or *flowing* water.¹

7. We are now in a position to appreciate the stress that was laid in the early Christian centuries on the parallel first instituted by St. Paul between Christ's Descent into Hades, and the Christian's descent into the baptismal waters. 'All we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death. We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death . . . if we have become united with Him by the likeness of His death, we shall be also by the likeness of His resurrection.'² Baptism was pictured as the Likeness of Christ's death, and Christian imagination dwelt on this thought and pursued it in detail, in the early history of the Church, after a fashion which it is an effort to us to understand. Chrysostom's commentary on Colossians ii. 12 f. illustrates what I mean. St. Paul says that having been buried with Christ in baptism, we are raised with Him through faith in God who raised Him from the dead, and that we are thus quickened with Christ, who made a show of principalities and powers after His Passion. Now Chrysostom fastens on this last thought. The 'principalities' over which Christ triumphed are the diabolical powers,

¹ See *Didache*, vii. 1 and the *Egyptian Church Order* (ed. Connolly, p. 183).

² Rom. vi. 3-5.

which lost their power over the dead when Christ died on the Cross. 'Never was the devil in so shameful a plight. For whilst expecting to have Him, he lost even those he had; and when that Body was nailed to the Cross, the dead arose.' That is, Chrysostom applies the words of Colossians ii. 15 to Christ's Descent into Hades and the spoliation of the infernal powers which He was believed to have effected there. Then he goes on to speak of the baptism of a catechumen, as comparable in some sort to the making of Adam. It is a new creation. 'He is formed in the waters, he receiveth spirit instead of a soul (*ἀντίψυχον πνεῦμα*).' As Adam was 'made a living soul' so the newly baptized receives a *spirit*. 'And after he is formed, He bringeth to him not beasts [over which Adam was given dominion] but devils and their prince, and saith, *Tread upon serpents and scorpions*.' This is the same idea that we have already (§ 6) found in one of the early baptismal rites, viz., that in Christian baptism evil demons are scared away and subdued.

8. The parallelism between Baptism and Christ's Descent into Hades was drawn out by many writers besides Chrysostom, and in several directions. For instance, both were described as leading up to a release of prisoners from captivity.

Baptism was, of course, a deliverance from the bondage of sin. It is *αἰχμαλώτοις λύτρον*, says Cyril of Jerusalem.¹ Ephraim Syrus sings, 'Bondmen in my baptism are set free';² 'blessed be He who has annulled the bonds.'³ And, in the West, a fourth-century writer, Pacian of Barcelona, urges that we are 'freed from our bonds when, through the sacrament of baptism, we come to the Sign of the Lord.'⁴ To quote an earlier testimony of somewhat special significance, Barnabas⁵ says that we have a prediction of baptism in the words of Isaiah xlv. 2, 3, 'I will go before thee and level mountains and crush gates of brass and break in pieces bolts of iron.'

Now perhaps the most conspicuous element in early Christian belief as to Christ's Descent into Hades was that thereby captive souls were delivered. The purpose of that Descent was that the prisoners might be freed. As Cyril says⁶: *κατήλθεν εἰς τὰ καταχθόνια, ἵνα κάκεῖθεν λυτρώσῃται τοὺς δικαίους*. The Keepers of the gates of Hades, according to the *Gospel of Nicodemus*—one of the best known pieces of Christian folklore—were scared when

¹ *Procat.* 16; cf. Greg. Nazianz. *Orat.* xl. 3.

² *Epiphany Hymns*, xiv. 38.

³ *Hymns on the Nativity*, xv. 9.

⁴ *De Bapt.* 8.

⁵ § 11.

⁶ *Cat.* iv. 11.

Christ arrived, an idea connected with the Greek text of Job xxxviii. 17.

ἀνοίγονται δέ σοι φόβῳ πύλαι θανάτου.
 πυλωροὶ δὲ ᾄδου ἰδόντες σε ἔπηξαν.

The *Gospel of Nicodemus* proceeds¹: 'Et ecce subito infernus contremuit, et portae mortis et serae comminutae et vectes ferrei confracti sunt et ceciderunt in terram,' *i.e.*, the brazen gates and iron bars of Hades were broken, a reminiscence of Isaiah xlv. 2 (cf. Ps. cvii. 16) which (as I have just now pointed out) is quoted by Barnabas as predictive of baptism.

And an earlier witness to the same idea is Origen, who thus comments on Psalm lxviii. 18: οὕτω τὴν κατάβασιν τοῦ σωτῆρος δείξας, καὶ τὴν τῶν δαιμονίων κατάλυσιν, δείκνυσιν αὐτὸν ἀνίοντα καὶ τοὺς πρὶν αἰχμαλώτους ἐλευθερώσαντα.

9. Again the issue of this deliverance from captivity was described in similar terms in both cases. The story of the 'Harrowing of Hell,' in the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, goes on to tell how the delivered saints come forth from Hades with Christ and are led into Paradise. So the cognate thought that in baptism we are restored to Paradise, *i.e.*, to that state of innocence from which Adam fell, the guilt of sin being annulled, is common in the Fathers. For example, Origen, commenting on

¹ B. viii. (24).

Genesis ii. 8, ἔθετο αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ, says, 'those who are regenerated through divine baptism are placed in Paradise,' *i.e.* the Church. So Gregory of Nyssa exclaims, 'The Jordan is glorified by regenerating men, and planting them in the Paradise of God.'¹ Cyril says that to the baptized 'is opened the Paradise of God.'² 'How can you enter into Paradise unless you are sealed in baptism?' is a rhetorical question put by Basil.³ 'He opens for you His door and bids you enter Eden' is a verse of Ephraim's Hymn of the Baptized. I have given some other illustrations in my edition of the *Odes of Solomon*, but these may suffice to establish the point here.

10. There is a passage in the *Shepherd of Hermas* ⁴ which brings together the topics of Hades and of Baptism in a curious manner. A parable is told of the building of a tower, which typifies the Church at rest. All the stones which form the foundations of the tower are taken from 'a certain deep place' (ἐκ βυθοῦ τινός), *i.e.* the Underworld, and there are four tiers, of 10, 25, 35, and 40 stones respectively. The lowest tier of 10 stones represents the first race of men, *i.e.* from Adam to

¹ *Sermo de Christi baptismo.*

² *Cat.* xix. 9; cf. i. 4 and *Procat.* 15.

³ *Hom.* xiii. 2.

⁴ *Sim.* ix. 3, 15, 16.

Noah,¹ and 'the 25 are the second generation of just men,' *i.e.* from Noah to David.² 'The 35 are God's prophets and ministers; the 40 are apostles and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God.' All alike had 'to rise up through water that they might be quickened' (δι' ὕδατος ἀναβῆναι, ἵνα ζωοποιηθῶσιν), the seal of baptism being needed for all. Now the 'apostles and teachers' differed from the rest in that they had been baptized before they passed into the Underworld; but, when there, 'after they had fallen asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached also to them that had fallen asleep before them, and themselves gave unto them the seal of the preaching.' That is, Hermas, while not speaking of the Descent of Christ into Hades, finds a mission there for the apostles and teachers of the Christian dispensation, *viz.*, that they might evangelize and baptize the prae-Christian saints, so that they, too, might 'be quickened.'

The Tower, which is the Church, is built of stones which represent both the dead and the living; and 'it is built upon waters, because your life is saved

¹ I have inadvertently written 'Adam to Abraham,' and 'Abraham to Moses' in my article 'Descent into Hades' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Apostolic Age*. Adam . . . Noah . . . David: these are the critical points in the history, for Hermas.

² These numbers agree with the genealogical tables in Luke iii.

and shall be saved by water.’¹ Baptism, to the thought of Hermas, is needed for all, and the pre-Christian saints received its seal in Hades. It is also to be noticed that the base upon which the whole building is erected, the lowest tier of its foundation, is the race of men before Noah.

11. We shall see the appositeness of this, when we come to discuss the famous passage in 1 Peter (iii. 19 f.). But next, we must recall a passage from Irenaeus, which shows that Hermas does not stand alone in his notion of a baptism in Hades, with its consequent ‘quickenings’ of the spirit. He is speaking of Christ’s Descent to the Underworld. ‘*Primogenitus enim mortuorum natus dominus, et in sinum suum recipiens pristinos patres, regeneravit eos in vitam dei . . . hic illos in evangelium vitae regeneravit.*’² The idea of *regeneration* is not far removed from that of *baptism*, although Irenaeus is not so fanciful as Hermas.

We come round again, then, to the association in ancient Christian thought between what may be called the folklore of the Descent into Hades and that of Baptism. But the connexion of the two ideas, as we have seen, goes back to St. Paul, and they are brought together by more than one subsequent writer. Chrysostom explicitly speaks of our baptism as a reflection or imitation of Christ’s

¹ *Vis.* iii. 3.

² *Haer.* iii. 22, 4.

Descent. 'For the being baptized and immersed and then emerging is a symbol of the Descent into Hell, and the return thence.'¹ A later testimony, for the West, to the same comparison is provided by Canon 6 of the Fourth Council of Toledo (633 A.D.), 'In aquis mersio, quasi in infernum descensio est.'

Indeed, one of the reasons that used to be assigned for the custom of triple immersion in baptism was that thus was recalled the 'three days and three nights' that Christ spent 'in the heart of the earth.' We have this explained by Gregory of Nyssa in his sermon on Christ's baptism, and also by Cyril of Jerusalem very explicitly: *κατεδύετε τρίτον εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ ἀνεδύετε πάλιν, καὶ ἐνταῦθα διὰ συμβόλου τὴν τριήμερον τοῦ Χριστοῦ αἰνιπτόμενοι ταφήν*, 'hinting by a symbol at the three days' burial of Christ.'²

12. We have constantly to bear in mind that in the early Christian ages the belief in Christ's Descent into Hades occupied a much more conspicuous place than it does in our modern days. We acquiesce in this article of the Creed, as expressing that our Lord was truly man in His death as in His life, and that His spirit underwent experiences after death like to those which we shall share.

¹ Hom. xl. in 1 Cor. : τὸ γὰρ βαπτίζεσθαι καὶ καταδύεσθαι, εἴτα ἀνανεύειν, τῆς εἰς ᾄδου καταβάσεως ἐστὶ σύμβολον, καὶ τῆς ἐκεῖθεν ἀνόδου κ.τ.λ. See § 15 below.

² *Cat. Myst.* xx. 4.

He 'went' to the place of departed souls. But of any mission which He fulfilled there, we think but little. Now in the first Christian centuries the nature of this mission was much discussed. That a great purpose was fulfilled by Christ's Descent to Hades was agreed by all, and controversy arose only as to the scope of His ministry there, some confining it to Jews, others to Gentiles, some to the just, others to the unjust, among those who had departed. But there was no question of its importance, and of its direct connexion with the purpose for which Christ died. Irenaeus, for instance, regards the Passion as having been endured in order that Christ might fulfil a ministry among the dead. He quotes a prophecy, the exact source of which cannot now be ascertained, of Christ's Descent to Hades, and explains it thus : ' *Alii autem dicentes : "Rememoratus est dominus sanctus mortuorum suorum qui praedormierunt in terra limi et descendit ad eos, uti erigeret, ad salvandum illos," causam reddiderunt, propter quam passus est haec omnia.*'¹ That is, the cause of Christ's death was, directly, that He might minister to the dead.

Origen says the same thing. His comment on St. Paul's words, 'To this end Christ died and rose again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living,'² is that they signify that Jesus died

¹ *Haer.* iv. 33, 12.

² *Rom.* xiv. 9.

that He might be Lord of the dead, while He rose again to be Lord, not only of the dead, but of the living.¹ And, again, his interpretation of the words of Psalm iii. 6, 'I laid me down and slept and rose up again,' leads him by devious paths to the conclusion that Christ effected much more for the salvation of souls by the separation of His soul from His body than would otherwise have been accomplished.² And then he quotes in further proof 1 Peter iii. 19 ff., the passage which it is the main purpose of this essay to examine afresh. The point which I wish to bring out in this paragraph is the intimate connexion which early Christian reflection found between the Sufferings of Christ and His Ministry in Hades.

13. I now proceed to examine 1 Peter iii. 19 f., and first we must set down a brief synopsis of the argument of the Epistle as a whole. The writer is addressing those who are in danger of persecution and who may be called to suffer.

I. 'Remember that you have an eternal inheritance, though you are sorely tried (i. 4-6). Concerning your salvation, the prophets testified, in dim forecasts of the sufferings of Christ and the glory following (i. 10-12). Be sober and loving (i. 13, 22). You are an elect people (i. 13-ii. 11). You are reviled, but when at last they see your

¹ *Contra Celsum*, ii. 65.

² Lommatszsch, xi. 420.

good works, your revilers will glorify God in a day of visitation (ii. 12). Submit yourselves to the civil power (ii. 13-18).

II. Slaves, *it is acceptable with God if you suffer wrongfully* (ii. 19, 20). Christ suffered thus, as our example, committing Himself to the righteous Judge (ii. 21-23); and also that we, having died to sin, might live to righteousness (ii. 24).

Wives, be subject to your heathen husbands (iii. 1-6).

Husbands, honour your wives (iii. 7).

Let all be loving and forbearing, not rendering reviling for reviling (iii. 8 f.). Hurt cannot really injure the righteous (iii. 13).

III. *It is acceptable with God, if you suffer wrongfully* (iii. 14-17). Christ suffered thus, the righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God. He was put to death in the flesh, but was quickened in the spirit (iii. 18).

In the spirit, He preached to the spirits in prison (iii. 19), the disobedient in Noah's day, when only eight escaped through water (iii. 20).

So baptism saves *you* through the Resurrection of the same Christ, who has gone to heaven, having subdued angels and authorities and powers (iii. 21).

So, as Christ suffered, do you take your sufferings in the same way (iv. 1). He that has suffered has ceased from sin (iv. 2), and the purpose of suffering is that you may henceforth live to God (iv. 3, 4). To God, your revilers shall give account (iv. 5). It was for this very reason that the Gospel was preached even to the dead, that having been judged in the flesh, they might live to God in the spirit (iv. 6).

IV. The end is near. Be sober and loving (iv. 7-11). Let not suffering disconcert you (iv. 12.) You are thus partakers of Christ's sufferings (iv. 13).

It is acceptable with God if you suffer wrongfully (iv. 14-16). The judgment of the unrighteous will be much more severe than that of the righteous (iv. 17, 18). When you suffer, commit yourself to God (iv. 19).

V. I, a witness of Christ's sufferings, tell you this (v. 1). Feed the flock (v. 2 f.). Humble yourselves before God that He may exalt you (v. 6). The devil is ready : resist him (v. 8). The same sufferings are shared by your brethren (v. 9). After suffering, God will perfect you (v. 10).

The above conspectus¹ is not exhaustive, as some important matters (parenthetically introduced) have been omitted, in order that the main

¹ A complete analysis of the Epistle is given by Bishop Chase in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, iii. 792.

argument might be more clearly exhibited. The First Epistle of Peter is a letter of counsel and consolation, setting forth the Christian philosophy of pain. Three times is the main thesis repeated, viz., that to suffer patiently, when innocent, for conscience-sake, is acceptable with God. This is to imitate the example of Christus Patiens. The disciple is not above his Master. And the writer suggests that suffering in the case of the righteous has a purifying and quickening power. It is God's judgment, and His judgments are always full of purpose. 'He that hath suffered in the flesh, hath ceased from sin' (iv. 1) is a bold statement of this truth, that pain is God's discipline.¹ In the case of Christ Himself the 'quickenings in the spirit' was subsequent to His being 'put to death in the flesh' (iii. 18). He became 'a quickening spirit' after He had passed through death.²

14. The sequence of thought in 1 Peter iii. 18-21 is thus clear. The writer is speaking of the sufferings of Christ, and the way in which the quickening power of His spirit was, as it were, released in His death. Death, which seems to end all ministries,

¹ The saying of St. Paul, 'he that is dead is justified from sin' (Rom. vi. 7) is not an exact parallel. Cf. Chrysostom's paraphrase, 'He that has come up from baptism (of which St. Paul has been speaking) since he has died there once for all, must remain for ever dead to sin.'

² Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 22, 36, 45; cf. p. 119 *infra*.

intensified His. After His Passion, He quickened the dead by His preaching in the spirit to them. And not only the dead, for He quickens us in baptism after a like manner, through the power of His Resurrection.

The parallelism is between the Ministry of Christ in Hades (v. 19), and the Ministry of Christ in baptism (v. 21). It has been shown (§§7, 8) that to early Christian thought the baptism of the Christian reproduces many features of the Descent of Christ to Hades. We are, by virtue of baptism, partakers, in some sense, of His Passion. 'We are buried with Him through baptism into death,' that as Christ was raised we also should walk with Him in newness of life.¹ We are 'quickened together with Him,'² a passage upon which the comments of Chrysostom quoted above are instructive in this context.

The idea, in short, underlying 1 Peter iii. 19-21 is that as Christ descended into the Abyss and preached the Gospel to captive souls, when 'quickened in the spirit' after His death, so we descend into the baptismal waters where Christ delivers our captive souls by the same power, viz., that of His Resurrection. This, too, accounts for the mention of Christ's triumph in verse 22. It was after His victory over the infernal powers that He ascended

¹ Rom. vi. 4.

² Col. ii. 13.

to glory. And to emphasise the reference in verse 22 to this triumphant conquest of the Underworld, which was afterwards called the 'Harrowing of Hell,' the Latin Vulgate interpolates in verse 22 the words *deglutiens mortem ut vitae aeternae heredes efficeremur*. So it is that, after the powers of evil have been subdued in us, we enter the Paradise of the Church by baptism.

We must bear in mind the purpose of the whole argument. The writer wishes to encourage his readers in their sufferings, and he does so by indicating the triumphant issues of the sufferings of Christ. The fact that Christ, after His Passion, ministered to the dead by His spirit would afford little consolation to living men, were it not that the apostle is able to add that we, too, have a kindred experience. The Power of Christ's spirit, quickened through His Death, saves the living in baptism (when rightly appropriated), as it was effectual in its ministry to the dead. It is to this salvation of the living that the apostle's argument leads up, and the Descent into Hades is mentioned just because to St. Peter as to St. Paul the thought that 'we are buried with Christ by baptism' and are thus partakers of His risen life is very vividly present.

15. This way of viewing baptism is somewhat foreign to our modern habits of thought. But that

it was common in the early Christian ages has been exemplified by the quotations from the Fathers which I have given above. I will add two or three more, to make it even clearer that the aspect of baptism which St. Paul presents in Romans vi. 4 and Colossians ii. 12 (not to speak of St. Peter's language in the passage before us) was prominent in doctrinal treatises of the early Eastern Church.¹

'How then,' asks Basil, 'do we accomplish the Descent into Hades? It is by imitating the Burial of Christ through our baptism. For the bodies of the baptized are, as it were, buried in water. Hence baptism signifies symbolically the putting away of the works of the flesh.' Then he quotes Colossians ii. 11, 12 and Psalm li. 7 and proceeds, 'Wherefore we are not washed in the Jewish manner after each defilement, but we know One saving Baptism, since there is One Death on the world's behalf and One Resurrection from the Dead, of which things baptism is the type (τύπος). On this account the Lord who orders our life instituted for us the covenant of baptism, which covenant provides a type both of death and life, the water fulfilling the image of death, and the Spirit providing the pledge of life. And thus it is clear why the water was associated with the Spirit, because there are two aims proposed in baptism; first, to destroy

¹ See, further, p. 58 *infra*.

the body of sin, that it may no longer bring forth fruit unto death; secondly, that it may live to the spirit, and have its fruit in sanctification. Now the water expresses the likeness of death, for it receives as it were the body in a tomb, but the Spirit induces the quickening power, renewing our souls from the deadness of sins into the life which was originally theirs.’¹ This, of course, is Pauline doctrine, and it is cited only to illustrate the emphasis which is laid upon baptism in its relation to the Death of Christ on the one hand, and to the quickening of a new life on the other.

Indeed that baptism is ‘for the remission of sins’ is an article of the Nicene Creed, and it is unnecessary to accumulate evidence to show that its efficacy was regarded as derived from the Passion. A sentence from Tertullian (in this not in disagreement with Catholic teaching) will suffice. He explains that baptisms are generally performed before Easter ‘cum et Passio Domini, *in qua tingimur*, adimpleta est.’² That the day specially chosen was usually Easter Eve is very significant as indicating the association which I have been exhibiting between baptism and Christ’s Descent to Hades.

I quote next a passage from the careful and elaborate lectures which Cyril of Jerusalem delivered

¹ *De spiritu sancto*, § 35.

² *De Bapt.* 19.

to newly baptized persons. He says that baptism not only purges our sins and ministers to us the gift of the Holy Spirit, but that it is 'antitypal of the sufferings of Christ' (τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων ἀντίτυπον), in proof of which he cites Romans vi. 3.¹ Now it is to be observed that, when speaking of baptism, Cyril here uses the same word, ἀντίτυπον, as is employed in 1 Peter iii. 21, and there can be little doubt that he had this passage in his mind. The word is rare in Scripture,² only occurring again in Hebrews ix. 24, and Cyril rather goes out of his way to use it.

17. We must next examine at some length the meaning of this word ἀντίτυπον, as the interpretation of the passage mainly turns upon it. Τύπος occurs sixteen times in the New Testament. (1) Its primary meaning seems to be 'a blow' or the effect of a blow, as in John xx. 25. (2) Thence it came to mean anything wrought in metal or stone, and so an idol as in Acts vii. 43 (Amos v. 26). (3) Figuratively, it is common for a 'model' or 'example,' in which sense it occurs eight times in the New Testament. And (4) it is used to express an outline sketch, to be filled in afterwards. Thus in Romans v. 14 Adam is 'a type of Him that was

¹ *Cat. Myst.* xx. 6.

² It occurs as an erroneous variant for ἀντίθετον in Esther xiii. 4, but nowhere else in the LXX.

to come,' the prefiguring, as it were, of the perfect man.

In this last sense the word has been adopted in Christian theology to indicate the prophetic character of Old Testament personages and events. Thus Barnabas speaks of Isaac, Moses, Joshua, and the Scapegoat as types of Christ; and Justin Martyr employs similar language, using the words *τύπος* and *σύμβολον* as identical in their significance. He speaks of 'the parables and types of the prophets,'¹ and of the Mosaic ordinances as 'types' fulfilled in Christ.² Circumcision was a *τύπος* of the spiritual circumcision of the future, which he mentions as connected with baptism.³ He does not use the word 'antitype,' but he is quite in sympathy with the line of thought which contrasts the 'type' of the Old Testament—material, and imperfect—with the 'antitype' of the New Testament—spiritual and perfect. In one remarkable passage,⁴ he finds in the story of the Flood a 'mystery of salvation,' prefiguring the salvation found in Christ; and as it is clear that he has 1 Peter iii. 19 f. in his mind, we must give the substance of his argument:

Justin quotes, as from Isaiah,⁵ the words, 'In the

¹ *Tryph.* 90.

² *Tryph.* 42.

³ *Tryph.* 41, 43.

⁴ *Tryph.* 138.

⁵ This is, apparently, an inaccurate reminiscence of the LXX of Isa. liv. 8.

Flood of Noah, I saved thee,' and he says here is τὸ μυστήριον τῶν σωζομένων ἀνθρώπων. The number of Noah's family who were saved (ὅντες ὀκτώ) is a σύμβολον of the eighth day, on which Christ appeared after He rose from the dead (ἀπὸ νεκρῶν ἀναστάς). Christ was, like Noah, the beginning of a new race, who were regenerated by Him through water (διὰ ὕδατος) and faith and the wood of the Cross, as Noah was saved in wood, being borne upon the waters with his own (διεσώθη ἐποχούμενος τοῖς ὕδασι). The words, 'In Noah I saved thee' apply not only to those of Jewish race, but to all who are obedient to God (τῷ λαῷ τῷ πειθομένῳ αὐτῷ).

Justin's main point is that the waters of the Flood are a 'symbol' or 'type' (for he elsewhere uses the words interchangeably) of the waters of Baptism, in that deliverance came to Noah by being 'borne upon the waters.' He does not mention St. Peter's First Epistle, but his language is clearly reminiscent of 'few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water' (διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος). They escaped through water to the ark of safety. Alike in Justin's exposition, and in St. Peter's words, the waters of the Flood are taken to be, not waters of destruction (as elsewhere in Scripture) but waters of deliverance, on which the ark rode securely. But, then, does this imply the further

inference that, the Flood being the τύπος, he would have spoken of Baptism as ἀντίτυπος?

Most commentators have accepted this inference, but it has grave difficulties. The word 'antitype' in this sense, viz., of the New Testament fulfilment of an Old Testament 'type,' is not found anywhere, so far as I know, in early Christian literature. The idea of the fulfilment of an Old Testament 'type' is indeed contained in Romans v. 14, and, as has been pointed out, is frequent in Barnabas and Justin. But the 'typology' of the Old Testament was only formulated gradually, and in its first expressions the technical term 'antitype' does not appear. Indeed, if τύπος means an imperfect sketch or outline or prefigurement, ἀντίτυπος would be an unfelicitous term for its completion or accomplishment. To speak of a 'countertype' does not convey the idea that it is the fulfilment of the 'type.' And the term is one which, it is safe to say, could not have been used in this sense, until the doctrine of 'types' had become so familiar that the meaning of τύπος from which it started had been forgotten.

18. But, in fact, the term ἀντίτυπος is used in a quite different signification during the early centuries, and moreover in a signification which is in precise accordance with its derivation. Τύπος is, as it were, the original die, and whatever is

ἀντίτυπος is the stamp of the die, just as the printed letter is the 'antitype' of the printer's type. This is the sense in which the term *ἀντίτυπος* is used in Hebrews ix. 24 (the only place in the New Testament besides 1 Peter iii. 21 where it is found) 'The holy places made with hands' are 'antitypal' of the true, *i.e.*, like in pattern to the true, which are the eternal realities in the heavens. The 'antitype' here is an imperfect adumbration of the 'type.'

So, too, in the so-called Second Epistle of Clement (written about 140 A.D.), the flesh is 'antitypal' of the spirit: *ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ αὕτη ἀντίτυπός ἐστιν τοῦ πνεύματος* (§ 14). As Lightfoot says (*in loc.*), 'the *ἀντίτυπον* is the material, temporary manifestation, the imperfect and blurred transcript of the original.'

The term was used in the same way by the Valentinian heretics. Irenaeus quotes them as speaking of the Church on earth as antitype of the Church in heaven.¹ And Epiphanius reports similar phrases. In the Valentinian jargon, *ἄνθρωπος* was *ἀντίτυπος τοῦ προόντος Ἀγενηήτου*.²

So, again, the baptismal water is described by Cyril of Jerusalem as 'the antitype of the Holy Spirit'; and the baptismal unction as 'the antitype of that with which Christ was anointed.'³

¹ *Haer.* i. 5, 6, ὁ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸ ἐκκλησίαν εἶναι λέγουσιν, ἀντίτυπον τῆς ἄνω ἐκκλησίας.

² *Haer.* xxxi. 5.

³ *Cat.* xxi. 1.

Finally, the Eucharistic elements were frequently called 'antitypes.' In the *Apostolical Constitutions* we find the expression more than once, e.g. παραδούς δὲ ἡμῖν τὰ ἀντίτυπα μυστήρια τοῦ τιμίου σώματος αὐτοῦ καὶ αἵματος.¹ And the same way of speaking is to be found in the Greek Fathers.²

That is to say, the regular meaning of 'antitype' in early Christian literature is that it is, as it were, an adumbration of the 'type.' The term ἀντίτυπος never occurs³ (I believe) in the modern sense of the 'fulfilment' or 'completion' of the τύπος. It always describes a lesser thing than the τύπος from which it derives all its significance and spiritual value.

Now there is no good reason for interpreting it differently in 1 Peter iii. 21, or for supposing that it must mean here exactly the opposite of what it means in Hebrews ix. 24, the only other Biblical passage in which it appears.⁴ Τύπος in 1 Peter v. 3

¹ *Apost. Const.* v. 14; cf. vi. 30.

² E.g., Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* xxiii. 20; Joh. Damasc. *De fid. orthod.* iv. 14. A long note by Pfaff on the term is printed in Stieren's *Irenaeus*, i. 883 f.

³ Thus the term 'antitype' does not appear anywhere in Cyprian, although he is full of typology, Isaac, Joseph, Samuel being types of Christ, and Rachel a type of the Church, etc.

⁴ Bishop Westcott (*in* Hebr. ix. 24) does not give any proof of his statement to this effect; he assumes, without discussion, that in 1 Pet. iii. 21 the baptismal water is ἀντίτυπον to the water of the flood. It is this which, as it seems to me, is erroneous.

means a 'model' or 'example,' and in strict conformity with this, ἀντίτυπον in 1 Peter iii. 21 should mean that which corresponds to, and is set over against, a spiritual pattern. In other words, the ἀντίτυπον of 1 Peter iii. 21 must be something inferior and derivative, when it is contrasted with its τύπος. It is not the spiritual reality to which the material type pointed onward. It is rather, in Lightfoot's words, 'the imperfect and blurred transcript of the original' reality.

19. Hence we must not interpret ἀντίτυπον in 1 Peter iii. 21, where it is applied to baptism, as signifying that the Flood is the type and Baptism the antitype. That idea might not have been alien to the early Christian writers, but they would not have expressed it thus. As has been said, they never use the term ἀντίτυπος in this way. The usage of the term is constant, and it indicates that the τύπος to which baptism is ἀντίτυπος was some greater thing than baptism, some spiritual reality from which baptism derives its efficacy. And Cyril of Jerusalem exactly expresses this 'greater thing' when he says, in the passage quoted above, that baptism is antitypal of Christ's Passion. He means exactly what St. Paul means in Romans vi. 4.

Here is the clue, then, to the structure of 1 Peter iii. 19 f. The comparison which is indicated by the word ἀντίτυπον is not between baptism and the

Flood (the mention of which is only parenthetical and incidental), but between baptism and Christ's Descent into Hades, of which baptism is but the *μίμησις* or imitation.

20. We may reach the same conclusion by another route. Baptism is an *act* or a *process*, and cannot be compared to a *material element*, like water. No doubt, the *water* of baptism might be compared to the *water* of the Flood (as Justin Martyr compares it in the passage cited above). But, according to the current interpretation of ὁ καὶ ὑμᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σώζει βάπτισμα, St. Peter is made to say 'which [water] now saves you antitypically, viz., baptism.' The sentence, thus interpreted, is not only clumsy in an extraordinary degree, but it states what no one has ever wished to state, viz., that baptism, *tout simple*, is comparable with water. That is to introduce a confusion into the metaphor which ought not to be introduced if it can be avoided.

Some editors have sought to avoid this confusion by referring ὁ, not to the ὕδωρ just mentioned, but to the whole sentence of v. 20 describing Noah's deliverance. This shows the difficulty of the current interpretation, and the perplexity caused by the endeavour to find the true antecedent for ὁ. Erasmus felt the difficulty of ὁ to be so grave that he printed conjecturally φ, in its place, and φ

has been, since his day, the reading of the *textus receptus*. It has no uncial manuscript authority, the only variant being the omission of σ by \aleph^* 73 and the Aethiopic version (these, nevertheless, being witnesses to the difficulty felt in interpreting σ). Hort, however, has urged that ϕ is the original reading, and his important note must be transcribed here :

‘The order of the words renders it impossible to take $\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\upsilon\pi\omicron\nu$ with $\beta\acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$, whether in apposition to σ or to the sentence; and it is hardly less difficult to take $\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\upsilon\pi\omicron\nu$ with σ , as though it were either $\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\upsilon\pi\omicron\nu$ $\sigma\nu$ or $\alpha\nu\tau\iota\tau\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omega\varsigma$. Accordingly σ seems to be a primitive error for ϕ , the force of which might be hidden by the interposition of $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ before $\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\upsilon\pi\omicron\nu$; this deviation from the more obvious order is justified by the emphasis on $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$. Both by sight and by sound the interchange of letters would be easy.’

In other words, Hort would read here : ϕ $\kappa\alpha\iota$ $\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$ $\alpha\nu\tau\acute{\iota}\tau\upsilon\pi\omicron\nu$ $\nu\upsilon\nu$ $\sigma\acute{\omega}\zeta\epsilon\iota$ $\beta\acute{\alpha}\pi\tau\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$, and his reasoning seems very strong.

Whether, however, we read ϕ or σ I submit that the antecedent should be found not in $\upsilon\delta\omega\rho$ (which introduces confusion into the metaphor), nor in v. 20 which speaks of Noah’s deliverance, but in v. 19 which speaks of Christ’s Preaching by His Spirit in Hades.

If we read δ , the sentence is still clumsy but intelligible: 'Which [*sc.* Christ's Descent into Hades] also saves you now antitypically, viz., baptism.' Or, as Dr. L. C. Purser suggests to me, the true antecedent of δ may be $\piνευμα$ of v. 18, just as it is the antecedent of ϕ in v. 19. In the Spirit Christ preached 'even to the spirits in prison.' And it is the same Spirit 'which saves us now antitypically, viz. baptism.'

But if we follow Hort and read ϕ , all is clear, and the verse runs: 'As an antitype to which [*sc.* Christ's Descent into Hades] baptism now also saves you.' V. 20 is parenthetical, and the parallelism is found in vv. 19 and 21, the comparison instituted being precisely that upon which St. Paul lays so much stress in Romans vi. 4 and Colossians ii. 12. It is true that the distance of ϕ from its antecedent is too great for a perfect literary style, but the structure of the whole passage is much involved, whatever interpretation be adopted.¹ And it is quite possible that the words 'saved through water' in v. 20 lead the writer on to 'baptism' in the next clause; but that is not to say that $\upsilonδατος$ is the antecedent of ϕ .

¹ See p. 214 *infra* for several passages in the Greek Bible where the pronoun is separated from its antecedent by a long clause.

21. The text of 1 Peter iii. 18-iv. 1 may then be exhibited as follows :

- iii. 18. Χριστὸς ἅπαξ περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἔπαθε, δίκαιος ὑπὲρ ἀδίκων, ἵνα ἡμᾶς προσαγάγῃ τῷ θεῷ, θανατωθεὶς μὲν σαρκὶ ζωοποιηθεὶς δὲ πνεύματι.
- iii. 19. ἐν ᾧ καὶ τοῖς ἐν φυλακῇ πνεύμασι πορευθεὶς ἐκήρυξεν,
- iii. 20. ἀπειθήσασί ποτε, ὅτε ἀπεξεδέχετο ἡ τοῦ Θεοῦ μακροθυμία ἐν ἡμέραις Νῶε, κατασκευαζομένης κιβωτοῦ, εἰς ἣν ὀλίγοι, τουτ' ἔστιν ὁκτὼ ψυχαί, διεσώθησαν δι' ὕδατος.
- iii. 21a. ᾧ [ὧ] καὶ ὑμᾶς ἀντίτυπον νῦν σώζει βάπτισμα,
- iii. 21b. οὐ σαρκὸς ἀπόθεσις ῥύπον ἀλλὰ συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν,
- iii. 22. δι' ἀναστάσεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν ἐν δεξιᾷ Θεοῦ, πορευθεὶς εἰς οὐρανόν, ὑποταγέντων αὐτῷ ἀγγέλων καὶ ἐξουσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων.
- iv. 1. Χριστοῦ οὖν παθόντος σαρκὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς τὴν αὐτὴν ἔγνωιαν ὀπλίσασθε, ὅτι ὁ παθὼν σαρκὶ πέπνυται ἁμαρτίας, κ.τ.λ.

That is : Christ suffered, and the sequel of His Passion was a quickening in spirit (iii. 18), of which the first issue was His ministry to the spirits in Hades (iii. 19), but of which another, more general, issue is His ministry to us in our baptism (iii. 21), which is in the power of His Resurrection (iii. 22). So let us take our Passion in a like temper, and it will be to us a purifying discipline (iv. 1).

Verses 20 and 21b are parentheses of an explanatory character, and the argument is best understood if we read the passage first without them.

We then perceive that (i.) it is the quickening of Christ's spirit after His Passion which is the ground of the encouragement that the apostle offers (compare iii. 18 and iv. 1) ; and (ii.) that the two spheres, as it were, of this intensified or quickened ministry of Christ are (a) to the *dead*, as exemplified by the Descent into Hades and Christ's victory there, and (b) to the *living*, who experience its power in their Baptism. And of these two, the Descent into Hades is the *τύπος*, our descent into the waters of baptism the *ἀντίτυπος*—the sacrament being the reflection and image of the Action of Christ.

22. We have now to ask, Why are the Noachian sinners specified in v. 20 ? Was the ministry to the 'spirits in prison' addressed only to them ? It was because the Petrine passage seemed to teach this, and to restrict Christ's preaching, if it was in Hades, to one section only of the men who lived before His Advent, viz., the antediluvian patriarchs, that Augustine was led to deny that here we have mention of *any* preaching in Hades. And he argues ¹ that the passage refers to a preaching by the pre-incarnate Christ to the contemporaries of Noah, imprisoned in the darkness of ignorance, who were afterwards overwhelmed in the Flood for their sins. This interpretation had a wide

¹ *Ad Evod. Ep.* 164, 15 f.

influence. It was accepted (in substance) by Thomas Aquinas,¹ and prevails to this day in unexpected quarters. But it is only an afterthought of exegesis, and introduces more difficulties than it was intended to remove. It makes havoc of the general argument which the Apostle derives from a contemplation of the sufferings of Christ. It was—only to mention one point—after Christ had been ‘put to death in the flesh’ that He was ‘quickened in the spirit,’ in which He ‘went and preached to the spirits in prison.’ Nor can sound exegesis refrain from including the ‘spirits in prison’ of 1 Peter iii. 19 under the νεκροί to whom ‘the Gospel was preached,’ according to 1 Peter iv. 6.² The argument, as we have seen, is continuous and leads up to these latter. Augustine, indeed, is forced by the exigencies of his theory to explain νεκροί of the spiritually dead, but the contrast between ‘the quick and the dead’ in the preceding verse (1 Pet. iv. 5) shows that the physically dead are indicated. We cannot escape from the assertion in 1 Peter iii. 19 and iv. 6 of a Ministry of Christ in Hades, after His Passion.³

¹ *Summa*, 3, 52, 2 ad 3.

² Cf. *Gospel of Peter*, § 9, ἐκήρυξας τοῖς κοιμωμένοις, a second-century allusion to the same belief.

³ Dr. Loofs, of Halle, argues, indeed, that σαρκί in 1 Pet. iv. 6 proves that the νεκροί there mentioned must be alive ‘in the flesh,’ and hence he agrees with Augustine in interpreting

23. It has been suggested, however, that the allusion of St. Peter is to a Ministry of Christ in Hades to *fallen angels*, not to the spirits of dead men, and that thus we have a ready explanation of his mention of 'those who were disobedient in the days of Noah.' For in the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (x. 12) there is a tradition preserved that 'the sons of God who took wives of the daughters of men' (cf. Gen. vi. 2) are bound fast 'under the hills until the day of their judgment.' The language of 2 Peter ii. 4, 5 lends some support to this view of 1 Peter iii. 19, 20 :

'If God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the ancient world, but preserved Noah with seven others, a preacher of righteousness, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly. . . .'

Whether the author of 2 Peter had 1 Peter in his mind or not, when he wrote this passage, the juxtaposition of the imprisonment of the angels who had sinned, and the destruction by the Flood, is probably sufficient to show that he believed the sin of the angels to be their union with the daughters of men,

νεκροί of the spiritually dead. But this is to overlook the difference in tense between κριθῶσι and ζῶσι. It is those who have *already* been judged in the flesh that are to live to God in the spirit. Loofs' article on 'Descent into Hades' is in the *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. iv. col. 659.

which is mentioned in Genesis vi. 4 as the crowning act of wickedness that directly provoked the Divine judgment of the Flood. The parallel passage in Jude 6 does not mention the Flood but indicates that the sin for which the angels were punished was lust:¹

‘Angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, he hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, etc., having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication.’

There is a good deal that is plausible in this interpretation of 1 Peter iii. 19. Πνεύματα in the New Testament generally means ‘angels,’ although it is also used once or twice of the disembodied spirits of men (Heb. xii. 23; cf. Luke xxiv. 37, 39). And the fallen angels in bondage is a favourite theme with the Jewish apocalyptic writers. One passage has been quoted above from the Ethiopic Book of Enoch, and others might be adduced, e.g., *Eth. Enoch* xxi. 10; liv. 5. So in the *Slavonic Enoch* (vii. 1) the fallen angels in the second heaven are described as ‘the prisoners suspended, waiting for the eternal judgment.’ So, too, in the *Apocalypse of Baruch*² it is written,

¹ Cf. *Testament of Reuben*, v. 6.

² lvi. 12, 13. I quote from Dr. Charles’ editions of these apocalypses.

‘Some of them [*sc.* the angels] descended and mingled with women. And then those who did so were tormented in chains.’

Yet, the idea of Christ *preaching* to the fallen angels in Hades is one not found elsewhere in Christian literature. Even in the Jewish-Christian apocrypha which I have mentioned, the only hint of anything of the kind is that in *Ethiopic Enoch* xii. 4, xiii. 8, xiv. 1, there is mention of the ‘watchers of the heavens,’ who have fallen from their high estate, being reproved by the seer. Dr. Bigg, in his notes on 1 Peter,¹ quotes indeed two passages from the *Bereschit Rabba* which I have not been able to verify. ‘But when they that are bound, they that are in Gehinnom, saw the light of the Messiah, they rejoiced to receive Him’; and again, ‘This is that which stands written: We shall rejoice and exult in thee. When? When the captives climb out of hell and the Shechinah at their head.’ These last passages seem to point to a Jewish tradition of a Descent of Messiah into Hades, but their date is uncertain, and in any case they allude, apparently, to a deliverance of human, rather than angelic, spirits from the Underworld, after the manner of the ‘Harrowing of Hell,’ which occupied so large a place afterwards in Christian speculation about the condition of the departed.

¹ *International Critical Commentary*, p. 163.

And there are other difficulties besetting this interpretation. As we have seen, the argument requires us to bring together the *πνεύματα* of iii. 21 and the *νεκροί* of iv. 6. But it would be very strange if the fallen angels in bondage were reckoned among *νεκροί* or 'the dead.'

Again, it is remarkable that no ancient commentator or theologian seems to have interpreted *πνεύματα* of the fallen angels, the idea having been given currency in our own time by Spitta.¹ The passage is so obscure that perhaps too much stress should not be laid on this, but we have to reckon with it, when weighing rival interpretations.

24. We come back then to the question, Why is mention made specially of the Noachian sinners, when the writer is thinking of Christ's preaching in Hades to departed souls?

One answer is that the Flood was the great judgment of the ancient world,² and that the sinners who were then judged may be taken as representing all the sinful who were to come after

¹ F. Spitta, *Christi Predigt an die Geister*, is quoted by Loofs in the article which I have cited, as taking this view.

² In a poem of Ephraim Syrus (*Nisibene Hymns*, xxxv. 7) he seems to have 1 Pet. iii. 19 f. in view. 'God made a flood, and washed the earth . . . By fire He gave me the Sodomites, and by flood the Giants . . . In place of deadly visitations of justice, He has brought in His Son the quickening of the dead by grace.'

them. The writer of the Epistle does not say this, indeed, but it is congenial to his argument and may have been in his thought. When *Hermas* describes his Vision of the Tower (§ 10 above), he pictures the lowest tier of the building—representing the company of righteous men from the beginning—as built of stones who symbolise the just from Adam to Noah. They are the beginning of the Tower. And, in like manner, no doubt in the lowest depth of Hades, would be assembled the sinners of the earliest period which was ended by the Flood. The Flood was the first recorded judgment of God upon a sinful race ; it was prior to the judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah (which is mentioned immediately after it in 2 Peter ii. 6). It was the first, as well as the most conspicuous and representative, of the national judgments of the past.

There is, besides, another reason why the sinners overwhelmed in the Flood may have been specially mentioned at this point. In an earlier part of this essay (§ 1) it has been pointed out that the waters of the Flood were conceived of as the abysmal waters which burst forth in judgment. Hades is ‘the Abyss,’ and into it ‘the disobedient in the days of Noah’ passed in a fashion specially exemplary. They were carried down by the eruption of the deep waters to the Underworld of terror. The

idea of Hades or Sheol would suggest to any one nurtured on Jewish beliefs the picture of overwhelming floods. The cry of Jonah 'out of the belly of Sheol' is 'all thy waves and thy billows passed over me.'¹ Countless souls were in that place of darkness and captivity, but St. Peter recalls, particularly and immediately, those who were imprisoned there on the fateful day when its waters overflowed in judgment and carried the disobedient to its depths. To our modern mind there is no particular connexion between the place of departed spirits and the waters of the Flood, but to a Jew of the Apostolic age the waters of the Flood were the waters leading to Hades, the abode of the dead.

25. Something remains to be said about the clause iii. 21*b*, in which baptism is said to be *οὐ σαρκὸς ἀπόθεις ῥύπου, ἀλλὰ συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν*. This is generally taken to mean that baptism is not a mere washing or cleansing of the body, but a spiritual act described as the *ἐπερώτημα* of a good conscience Godward. If this be the meaning (more particularly if baptism be regarded as 'antitypal' of the Flood) the writer has suddenly passed to a new thought about water. He insists that the waters of baptism are not only waters of purification of the body. But

¹ Jonah ii. 3.

there is no hint of this use of water, viz., that it *cleanses*, in what he has said about the Flood.¹ If *σαρκὸς ἀπόθεις ῥύπου* means ‘bodily cleansing,’ the sentence is otiose and irrelevant.

Further, to express the cleansing of the body by such a phrase would be awkward and pedantic. We should expect *σαρκὸς κάθαρσις* or some expression of the kind.

‘*Ρύπος* means, in medical writers, the wax of the ear (see Mayor on James i. 21), and is used generally of the grossness of the body. It appears four times in the LXX (Job ix. 31 ; xi. 15 ; xiv. 4 and Isa. iv. 4) in the sense of filth or uncleanness. It does not occur again in the New Testament ; but we have *ῥυπαρία* in James i. 21 and *ῥυπαρός* in Revelation xxii. 11, in both cases with reference to sins of the flesh.

We get more help from the word *ἀπόθεις*. This does not appear in the LXX, but *ἀποτιθέναι* is frequent—sometimes meaning ‘to lay up in safe keeping,’ but twice in its strict etymological meaning ‘to divest’ oneself, *sc.* of garments (Lev. xvi. 23 ; 2 Macc. viii. 35). In Acts vii. 58 it is used explicitly of such ‘disrobing,’ and the idea of ‘putting away’ in other passages (Rom. xiii. 12 ; Eph. iv. 22 ;

¹ Origen speaks of the Flood as the Purification of the earth (*c. Cels.* vi. 58), but this thought is not present to the mind of the writer of 1 Pet. iii. 19 f. Tertullian (*De Bapt.* 8) speaks of the Flood as ‘*baptismus mundi.*’

Col. iii. 8) has a similar suggestion. The noun *ἀπόθεσις* is only found again in the Greek Bible in 2 Peter i. 14, *ἡ ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματός μου*, 'the putting off my tabernacle,' *i.e.* the abandonment of the body in death, when it is 'put off' like an old garment (cf. 2 Cor. v. 2-5). That is to say, in the only other passage where *ἀπόθεσις* appears, it is used of the 'putting away' of the body at death. It is natural then to inquire if it may not have this meaning in the passage before us; and, in fact, this harmonises with the argument of the passage as a whole.

The writer, as we have seen, regards baptism as 'antitypical' to the Descent into Hades. The Lord's experience in that Descensus is repeated 'antitypically' in our experience in baptism. There is, however, an obvious difference. In His case there was a separation of spirit and body, the Body remaining in the sepulchre, and the Spirit descending to preach to the spirits in prison. Christ 'put off' His Body in that spiritual mission. That is not the case with us, when we go down into the baptismal waters. We do not 'put off the grossness of the flesh,' and, in drawing out the parallel which is in the writer's thought, it is apposite to mention this. As an antitype to Christ's descent into Hades, baptism saves us, but there is in our case no *ἀπόθεσις* of the earthly

tabernacle, which hampers the spirit in its quest. The body is not discarded with its grossness.¹

Baptism is, on the other hand, *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν*. Leaving on one side for the moment the meaning of the rare word *ἐπερώτημα*, the mention of a ‘good conscience’ is significant. The point of the argument throughout the Epistle, as has been shown, is not that suffering, deserved or undeserved, is acceptable to God, but suffering which is endured for conscience-sake : *εἰ διὰ συνείδησιν Θεοῦ ὑποφέρει τις λύπας πάσχων ἀδίκως* (ii. 19), and again : *συνείδησιν ἔχοντες ἀγαθὴν* (iii. 16). Such was Christ’s Passion : He was *δίκαιος* (iii. 18). We do not reproduce ‘the burial with Him’ in baptism, unless we go down into the baptismal waters with ‘a good conscience.’ We do not reproduce it by death or the abandonment of the body, but by the *ἐπερώτημα* of a ‘good conscience,’ which was an essential feature in His Death and Passion.

What, then, is *ἐπερώτημα*? The word is used in Thucydides (iii. 53, 68) in the sense of ‘question’; and some commentators have found here an allusion to the questions put to candidates for baptism in

¹ St. Paul explains in Col. ii. 11, 12, that there is, in baptism, a true *ἀπέκδυσις τοῦ σώματος τῆς σαρκός*; but this ‘putting off’ of the whole body of carnal affections is not the same thing as the discarding, or *ἀπόθεσις*, of the body itself.

the baptismal rite. But this is to read back into the New Testament the customs and formulæ of a later day. It is not likely that in the Apostolic age the baptismal 'questions' were so familiar a feature of the rite, that they could be alluded to thus.

Alford compares 2 Sam xi. 7 ἐπηρώτησεν Δαυεὶδ εἰς εἰρήνην Ἰωάβ: 'David asked about the peace (or health) of Joab'; and he suggests that ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεόν means 'inquiry after God.' This, as Bigg points out, would require ἐπερώτησις rather than ἐπερώτημα, but perhaps such nicety of language can hardly be pressed. ἀπόθεσις (it may be said) is an act or a process, and ἐπερώτημα is set over against it. It may mean 'questioning' or 'quest' as well as 'question'; the act of asking, as well as the formulated request.

The word only occurs twice in the LXX, as follows:

Ecclus. xxxvi. (xxxiii.) 3. ὁ νόμος αὐτῷ πιστὸς ὡς ἐπερώτημα δήλων, where the Vulgate has *interrogatio*. It is, however, rather *stipulatio*, the formal interrogatory that was put by one litigant to another in a legal process.

Dan. (Th.) iv. 14 (17). καὶ ῥῆμα ἀγίων τὸ ἐπερώτημα, where the Vulgate has *petitio*. The R.V. of this verse is 'the sentence is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand (mg. matter) by the

word of the holy ones.' Driver notes that *demand* here is 'generally supposed to have the weakened sense of the *matter*.'

In both cases, the Hebrew word behind ἐπερώτημα is שְׁאֵלָה, which Fuerst's Lexicon explains as 'an object of desire, and so *concern, business, thing*,' and connects with the root שָׁלַח 'to penetrate,' and so either to 'ask' or to 'go down deep,' with which again is connected the proper name שְׁאוֹל, Sheol.¹

In neither case, then, can it be said that ἐπερώτημα is exactly equivalent to 'question' or 'questioning.' It may perhaps be best rendered 'appeal.' The words συνειδήσεως ἀγάθης refer back to v. 16 where the συνείδησις ἀγάθη is to enable its possessor πρὸς ἀπολογίαν (v. 15) 'to make a good defence'; and so in v. 21 it is 'the appeal of a good conscience towards God' that is in the writer's thought.

But the point brought out, whatever be the precise rendering of ἐπερώτημα, is that the saving

¹ The connexion between שְׁאֵלָה the Hebrew word behind ἐπερώτημα in the LXX and שְׁאוֹל = Hades is perhaps a mere coincidence. But if, as Jerome thought (*Ep. ad Hedib.* 150) the First Epistle of Peter was written in Aramaic originally, it would be worth considering whether the writer did not at this point introduce a play upon words. He has been comparing the ministry of Baptism to the ministry of the Descent into Hades. There is no resemblance in one point, viz., that in Baptism the neophyte does not die, as Christ died; but nevertheless Baptism is the *She'ola* of a good conscience Godward.

efficacy of baptism resides in its spiritual character, and in the relation of the baptized person to God. It was *in the spirit* that Christ descended into Hades, and it is as a spiritual process that His Ministry in Baptism is efficacious.

CHAPTER II

THE SYMBOLISM OF BAPTISM

THE imagery by which the early Christian writers explained and illustrated the baptism of a catechumen, and the significance of the baptismal waters, was various and manifold. Baptism was Illumination or Enlightenment. It was the Christian's Seal. It was a Release from the fetters of sin. It was the Clothing of Immortality, which the new-made Christian put on, when he had 'put on Christ.' But, in addition to all these, and at an earlier period than any of these, three distinct lines of illustration appear, the examination of which is specially important for the interpretation of the New Testament references to baptism and its effects.

1. The most primitive conception of baptism is that it is a *washing*, an act of spiritual cleansing. In many religions, and among many races, outside the range of either Jewish or Christian influences, there is a ceremonial of washing the body, as a symbol of ritual purification or the like. This natural symbolism is widespread, and it is often associated with beliefs as to the mysterious powers of running water, which seemed to primitive man

to be a living thing. The efficacy of bathing in sacred rivers, such as the Ganges, is, for example, a prominent tenet in Hindu religion. And purificatory rites for the removal of *tabu*, especially in the case of a new-born child, or to ward off evil spirits, have been observed in Polynesia and elsewhere.¹

This conception of water as an agent of spiritual purification was deep rooted in Judaism. The ceremonial 'washings' of the Pharisees had this in view. They laid much stress on the 'baptisms of cups and platters,' which the faithful Israelite was to use. Ceremonial washing, after touching a corpse, was specially prescribed. 'He that washeth himself (βαπτίζόμενος) after touching a dead body, and toucheth it again, what profit hath he in his washing (λουτρῶ)' ? is one of the queries of the Son of Sirach,² and its phraseology suggests the beginning of the later usage of βαπτίζειν, λουτρόν, in a special religious sense.

The baptism of proselytes, or converts from heathenism to the Mosaic Law, seems to have been well established among the Jews in the first century of the Christian era. And while its primary significance was a cleansing from Levitical un-

¹ See the various articles on 'Baptism' in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*.

² Eccclus. xxxiv. 25.

cleanness, it was probably regarded also as a symbol of purification from the moral pollutions of heathenism. This moral idea was specially emphasised in the baptismal teaching of John the Baptist. His call to his countrymen was a call to repentance, and in bidding them submit to baptism at his hands, just as a proselyte from paganism would have been required to do, the symbolism of baptism as an act signifying moral cleansing, was brought out. Christian baptism was a sacrament as well as a symbol, but the old symbolism of 'cleansing' remained, and received a deeper meaning. 'Ye were washed,' wrote St. Paul to his Corinthian converts,¹ as he reminded them of their baptism. To St. Paul himself, after his conversion, it had been said 'Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins.'² And to his thought the Church as a whole was 'cleansed by the washing of water with the word.'³ It is, perhaps, worthy of remark that this simplest and most natural illustration of the significance of baptism, viz., that it is a *cleansing* process, does not appear in the writings of the second century, until we arrive at Tertullian.⁴

2. Baptism symbolises a moral and spiritual

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 11.

² Acts xxii. 16.

³ Eph. v. 26.

⁴ The nearest approach to this view of baptism in the sub-apostolic age is in Barnabas (§ 11): 'We go down into the water laden with sins and filth, and rise up from it bearing fruit in the heart.'

cleansing, and thus it marks the beginning of a new era in the progress of the soul. It is a fresh start in the spiritual life, the pollutions of the past being laid aside. And when the Jews thought thus of the baptism of proselytes, they described it as a *new birth*. 'The Gentile that is made a proselyte, behold, he is like a child new born.'¹ The metaphor springs naturally from the thought of baptism as an initiatory rite of purification. It is *regeneration*, a beginning the world over again, a rebirth into a sphere of larger and happier opportunity.

The first appearance of this idea in the New Testament is in the discourse of Christ to Nicodemus. 'Except a man be born anew (or from above, *ἄνωθεν*) he cannot see the Kingdom of God . . . except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.'² If the report of this discourse be accepted as historical (and it bears internal evidence to its own genuineness), the baptism which Christ urged upon Nicodemus must have been, in the first place, the baptism to which John the Baptist was calling the Jews. This baptism with water 'unto repentance' was commended as the beginning of a new

¹ See, for references to the Talmudical writings, Lightfoot, *Horae Hebraicae*, upon John iii. 3. The date of these Talmudical phrases is not certain, but it is highly probable that the expression 'the new birth' is prae-Christian, as applied to baptism.

² John iii. 3, 5.

life, not only for proselytes from heathendom, but for the Pharisees themselves. Nicodemus questions the possibility of making a fresh start in this way. How can a man go back on his past? The metaphor is repudiated by him as untrue to life. Yet Christ presses it; and the addition of the words ‘and the Spirit’ introduces the conception which alone can lift baptism from its place as a mere symbolical rite to the status which it afterwards had as a Christian sacrament. ‘The Spirit’ is the new force which has to be reckoned with.

Once again in the New Testament, but only once, is this metaphor used of baptism. It is described in Titus iii. 5 as ‘the washing of *regeneration*’ (λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας). The doctrine of regeneration occupies a large place in the theology of the New Testament,¹ and no attempt is made to discuss it here; but the point to be noticed is that the word παλιγγενεσία does not appear in connexion with baptism except in Titus iii. 5. It is all the more remarkable that it is this metaphor, more frequently than any other, which has been employed throughout the Christian ages to illustrate the significance of the baptismal waters. Justin uses the verb ‘to regenerate’ (ἀναγεννᾶν) as the equivalent of ‘to baptize.’ We bring the

¹ See J. V. Bartlet’s article ‘Regeneration,’ in Hastings’ *Dictionary of the Bible*.

catechumens, he says, 'where there is water; and after the same manner of regeneration as we also were regenerated ourselves, they are regenerated';¹ and he goes on to quote John iii. 3. Christ, he says in another place, 'was made the beginning of a new race which is regenerated by Him through water, and faith, and word, which contains the mystery of the Cross.'² So Clement of Alexandria: 'Straightway, having been regenerated (*ἀναγεννηθέντες*) we attained that perfection for which we were striving, for we were illuminated, which is to know God.'³ Both Hippolytus⁴ and Irenaeus⁵ speak of 'the laver of regeneration'; and Irenaeus more than once describes baptism as 'the power of regeneration unto God.'⁶ We may say, indeed, that, among early Christian writers, the image of regeneration or the new birth is that which is habitually employed to illustrate the significance of baptism. When we come to later times, various other illustrations are used, but none with such frequency as this; and in our own age the controversies that have arisen about baptismal grace have been mainly occupied with discussions of the meaning of the term 'regeneration.'

3. The imagery used by St. Paul (except in

¹ *Apol.* i. 61.

² *Tryph.* 138.

³ *Paed.* vi., *sub init.*

⁴ *Theoph.* 10.

⁵ *Haer.* v. 15, 3.

⁶ *Haer.* iii. 17, 1; cf. i. 21, 1.

Titus iii. 5, if this passage may be quoted as Pauline) is wholly different. He uses an illustration which is of profound significance, and which is peculiar to Christianity.¹ In his great doctrinal epistles he compares baptism, not to birth, but to death and resurrection. 'We, who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His Death. We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.'² 'Having been buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.'³

The only other place in the New Testament where this wonderful comparison seems to be instituted is in 1 Peter iii. 19 ff., a passage which has been discussed at length in chapter i. It is probable that this coincidence of thought is due to the acquaintance of St. Peter with the Epistle to the Romans. The parallelisms between 1 Peter and Romans are too remarkable to be due to accident. They will be found in a convenient form in Sanday and Headlam's *Romans*, p. lxxiv, and a

¹ Dr. Purser calls my attention to the cryptic description of initiatory rites found in Apuleius xi. 23: 'I drew nigh to the confines of death, I trod the threshold of Proserpine, I was borne through all the elements, and returned to earth again.'

² Rom. vi. 3, 4.

³ Col. ii. 12.

study of them will show that, again and again, the argument and the phraseology of 1 Peter go back to the earlier epistle.¹ 'The true key to not a few difficult passages of St. Peter,' says Hort, 'is to be found in tracing back the thought to its origin in one or both of [the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians].'² And if the reasoning of chapter i. be admitted, the passage 1 Peter iii. 19 f. must be added to the passages which may be traced to a Pauline origin.

The comparison of Baptism to the Death of Christ, or rather to His Descent into Hades after His Passion, is so recondite that we should not expect to find it very frequently adopted in Christian literature, despite its being able to claim the authority of St. Paul.³ It appears, indeed, in the baptismal rites; and 'the inward and spiritual grace' of baptism is still declared in the Church Catechism to be 'a death unto sin,' as well as

¹ This is the view of Sanday and Headlam, Hort, and Lightfoot (*Clement*, ii. 499). Bigg is not satisfied that the dependence of 1 Peter upon Romans can be proved; but he allows that the resemblances between the two epistles are numerous and remarkable.

² Hort, *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, p. 5.

³ The conception of baptism as a dreadful and mysterious rite—like the initiatory rites of the Greek Mysteries—may perhaps be read into our Lord's question: 'Can ye be baptized into the baptism that I am baptized with?' (Mark x. 38). But this is doubtful.

‘a new birth unto righteousness.’ But the comparison of baptism to the Death or the Descensus of Christ has never been so popular an image as that of the New Birth, and was dwelt upon more commonly by the great Eastern theologians than in the West.

We find a hint, perhaps, of this symbolism in Hermas: ‘The seal is the water; they go down into the water dead, and they come up alive.’¹ For Tertullian baptism is ‘*symbolum mortis*’² and he speaks of ‘*efficacia lavacri per Passionem et Resurrectionem*.’³ When he comes upon the verse Rom. vi. 4 in the course of an argument about the Resurrection, he has to note the comparison: ‘by a figure we die in our baptism.’⁴ But Tertullian never dwells on this; and Cyprian, who has much to say of baptism, does not quote Rom. vi. 4 in connexion with it at all. The comparison, which we are considering, did not attract the attention of early Christian writers in the West.

It is not surprising that we do not find it in Justin Martyr, for he alludes but rarely to the Pauline Epistles or the Pauline theology. Nor does Irenaeus avail himself of St. Paul’s comparison between baptism and the death of Christ, although he quotes Rom. vi. 3, 4 for another purpose.⁵ Nor

¹ *Sim.* ix. 16.

² *De Poen.* 6.

³ *De Bapt.* 11.

⁴ *De Resurr. Carnis*, 47.

⁵ *Haer.* iii. 16, 9.

is it found in Clement of Alexandria. The earliest explicit reference to this symbolism is in Origen, who after his manner dwells upon its details. We must be dead to sin, he urges, before we can be buried with Christ, for the *living* are not *buried*. Baptism is the beginning of a new life, just as Christ's burial was in a new tomb. He was wrapped in a clean linen cloth for burial, and so we must bring no defilements with us to our baptism.¹

When we come to the great theological writers of the next age, to Chrysostom, Basil, and Cyril of Jerusalem, we find that this conception has assumed a prominent place in Christian thought.² They do not find any inconsistency between the ideas of baptism as a new birth, and as comparable to death and resurrection, for in any case it marks a fresh start in the spiritual life. 'The water of salvation,' says Cyril boldly, 'is at once your grave (τάφος) and your mother.'³

A few quotations may be given from the *Apostolical Constitutions*, which in their present

¹ Comm. in Rom. v. (Lommatzsch, vi. 380-385).

² References have been given above, pp. 9, 24. Mr. C. F. Rogers in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, xiii. p. 412 quotes, for another purpose, an apposite passage from Gregory of Nyssa (*The Great Catechism*, c. 35): 'The descent into the water and the trine immersion . . . involves another mystery . . . by having the water thrice poured on us, and ascending up again from the water, we enact that saving burial and resurrection which took place on the third day.'

³ Cat. xx. 4.

form were compiled towards the end of the fourth century, but incorporate older material. 'This baptism is given into the death of Jesus . . . the descent into the water, the dying together with Christ, the ascent out of the water, the rising again with Him' (III. ii. 17; cf. II. iii. 7, VI. xxiii.). Again, the compiler explains that the reason why martyrdom is reckoned as supplying the lack of baptism is that it is a truer baptism than that of water, because the martyr dies with Christ really and not only symbolically (V. vi.). And No. 50 of the so-called *Apostolical Canons* tells of a perversion of this symbolism on the part of the Eunomians. They were accustomed to baptize with only one immersion 'into the death of Christ'; a practice which the canon forbids, the threefold immersion in the Name of the Trinity being prescribed. These allusions bear witness to the prevalence of that comparison of baptism to the Death of Christ and His Descent into Hades, which I have been tracing in Christian literature. They represent Syrian, rather than Alexandrine, teaching; and it seems that the image of Rom. vi. 4, 5 appealed to the mind of the Asiatic theologians more than it did to the West or to Alexandria.

CHAPTER III

THE BAPTISMAL FORMULA

THE words ascribed to our Lord at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel, 'Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost,'¹ have been regarded by many writers as of doubtful genuineness.² It is pointed out that this formula (as it is called) for the administration of baptism is not mentioned again in the New Testament. In the Acts the phrase used of those received into the Church is, 'they were baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ'³ (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰη. Χρ.) or 'into the Name of the Lord Jesus'⁴ (εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρ. Ἰη.); and it has been supposed that this shorter and simpler formula was employed in early days, and that baptism in the Name of the Trinity was a later practice. At a time when it had become the established custom to use the longer and fuller formula, the Gospel according to St. Matthew

¹ Matt. xxviii. 19.

² The integrity of the text is completely defended by Bishop Chase, in answer to Mr. F. C. Conybeare's strictures, in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, vi. p. 483 f.

³ Acts ii. 38, x. 48.

⁴ Acts viii. 16, xix. 5.

assumed its present form, and it was then that the concluding words, containing the great missionary commission of the Church, were added.

Commentators have adopted different expedients for escaping this unwelcome conclusion. For instance, it was suggested by Cyprian, who seems to have perceived the difficulty, that while it was sufficient to baptize a Jew 'in the Name of Jesus Christ,' since he already confessed the true God, in the case of Gentiles the full formula reciting the threefold Name was essential. In the case of Jews, where the shorter formula was used, *e.g.* by St. Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 38), he notes, 'Jesu Christi mentionem facit Petrus, non quasi Pater omitteretur, sed ut Patri Filius quoque adiungeretur.'¹ This solution is ingenious, but it will not explain the language of the Acts, for in the account of the baptism of Cornelius and his companions, who were Gentiles, it is only said that it was administered 'in the Name of Jesus Christ' (Acts x. 48).

Another attempted explanation is based on the view that baptism in the Name of Christ is virtually baptism in the Name of the Trinity, and that therefore it did not matter which formula was used. No disobedience to Christ's parting command was implied in substituting for the formula prescribed

¹ Cyprian, *Epistles*, lxxiii. 17.

by Him a shorter formula which is equivalent to it. But whatever view may be taken of the 'validity' of baptism accompanied by the shorter formula, it is extremely improbable that in such a matter the Apostles would have disregarded the direct command of Christ, supposing it to be really His, and that it enjoined the use of certain words.

A much better explanation of the difficulty is,¹ that when St. Luke says that people were baptized 'in the Name of the Lord Jesus,' he is not indicating the formula which was used in baptizing, but is merely stating that such persons were baptized as acknowledged Jesus to be the Lord and the Christ. And it may be that in all the recorded cases of baptism in the Acts the longer formula was actually employed, although it is not explicitly rehearsed in the narratives. This is a theory which seems in several ways to co-ordinate the facts better than any other that has been put forward, although it is perhaps not entirely complete. It is, indeed, all but certain that the earliest forms of the baptismal confession of faith were single, not triple. The verse inserted in the Western text of the story of the baptism of the Ethiopian by Philip expresses accurately the profession that was demanded of those wishing to be baptized: πιστεύω τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι τὸν Ἰησοῦν (Acts viii. 37). In

¹ See, e.g., Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. 'Baptism.'

brief, they were required to say, 'Jesus is Lord'; cf. Romans x. 9, 1 Corinthians xii. 3, Philippians ii. 11. So of the people of Samaria it is recorded : ὅτε δὲ ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ εὐαγγελιζομένῳ περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐβαπτίζοντο ἄνδρες τε καὶ γυναῖκες (Acts viii. 12). And thus when St. Luke says, a few verses further on, that they were baptized εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ (Acts viii. 16) he seems to mean no more than this, that they were incorporated into the society or kingdom of which the Lord Jesus was the Head. But it will be asked, Is this the natural meaning of the words βαπτίζεσθαι εἰς ὄνομά τινος? Do not such words imply a definite formula accompanying the baptismal act? The question goes to the root of the matter, and it is the purpose of this paper to examine it afresh.

The true solution, as it seems to me, was given long ago by Gerard Voss. He argued ¹ that if the Lord's intention was to prescribe a formula for recital during the act of baptizing, He would have put His command in the form, 'Make disciples of all the nations, *saying, I baptize thee in the Name,*' etc. But as He said merely 'Make disciples, etc., *baptizing them,*' etc., no form of words is prescribed. This view is adopted both by Neander ² and more

¹ *Disput. de Bapt.*, Thes. v. p. 48.

² *Planting of Christianity*, vol. i. p. 21 (Eng. tr.).

explicitly, by Stier,¹ but it has not found acceptance of late years. Despite Stier's long argument it seems to be tacitly assumed by most commentators that the words of Matthew xxviii. 19 prescribe a form of words ; and this assumption will be found, I believe, when tested, to lack evidence. It is the more desirable to examine the question *de novo*, as Neander does not argue the point at all, and Stier envelopes the discussion in such a mist of words that it is hard to discern his meaning. Besides, he does not seem to me to have put the case at all as forcibly as he might have done ; and, further, evidence is now available as to the meaning of εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, of which he did not know.

The usage of the Old Testament as to the meaning of the phrase ' the Name of Jehovah ' must first be scrutinised. Whatever the Hebrew word שֵׁם originally meant, it is used in the Old Testament as suggestive (i.) of the personality or character of the person named : cf. Isaiah ix. 6 ; (ii.) of the idea of authority, and so of ownership ; cf. Amos ix. 12 (quoted Acts xv. 17), where ' all the nations over which Jehovah's Name was called ' are all the nations which had recognised Jehovah's authority ; see also Jeremiah xiv. 9. Finally (iii.) the ' Name ' of Jehovah is used as equivalent to the Person of Jehovah ; and in this, ' its most characteristic and

¹ *Words of the Lord Jesus*, vol. viii. p. 341 f. (Eng. tr.).

frequent usage,'¹ it is significant of Jehovah as manifested to men and as entering into relations with them: cf. 2 Samuel vii. 13, Isaiah xviii. 7, etc. The 'Name' of God in the Old Testament 'denotes all that God is for men' (Cremer). So Bishop Westcott observes on John i. 12: 'The revealed Name gathers up and expresses for man just as much as he can apprehend of the Divine nature.'

Before we go further, we must observe that a usage of *ὄνομα* identical with (i.) and (ii.) above is to be found in the Greek papyri of the early Christian centuries. Thus we have several times the expression *ἐντευξις εἰς τοῦ βασιλέως ὄνομα*, i.e. 'a petition to the king's majesty,' the *name* of the king being the essence of what he is as ruler.² This is like sense (i.) and is also comparable to sense (iii.) Again, in an inscription, probably of the end of the first century (*C.I.G.* ii. 2693 *e*), there is mention of the sale of certain objects being effected *εἰς τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὄνομα*, i.e. they were sold so that henceforth they were put to the account (*ὄνομα*) of Zeus and became the property of the god. This implies the sense of *ownership* as in (ii.) above. Another illustration of the same usage is afforded by a second century inscription (*B. U.* 256₅) *τὰ ὑπάρ-*

¹ G. B. Gray, in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. 'Name.'

² Deissmann, *Bible Studies*, p. 146 (Eng. tr.).

χοντα εἰς ὄνομα δνεῖν = 'that which belongs to the account of the two.'¹

We have, then, abundant justification, both from the LXX and from the papyri of the early centuries, for the suspicion that ὄνομα may be used in these metaphorical senses in the Greek of the New Testament. It *may* connote character or personality, or even authority and ownership, if the context permits us to translate it so. And in fact, in Matthew x. 41, ὁ δεχόμενος προφήτην εἰς ὄνομα προφήτου μισθὸν προφήτου λήμψεται, κτλ., the meaning of receiving a prophet 'in the name of a prophet' is plainly 'receiving him *quâ* prophet,' i.e. 'having regard to his prophetic character and calling,' which is practically equivalent to sense (i.) specified above.² The employment of the word ὄνομα does

¹ L.c. p. 197. There are several instances in the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri* (iii. 246, vii. 211, etc.) of ὄνομα being used in the sense of *account*.

² Matt. xviii. 20, οὗ γάρ εἰσιν δύο ἢ τρεῖς συνηγμένοι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα is a difficult phrase. It probably means 'where two or three are gathered together on My account,' or 'with thoughts of Me.' But we cannot always distinguish εἰς ὄνομα from ἐν ὀνόματι. As Blass points out (*Grammar of N. T. Greek*, p. 122), in Hellenistic Greek εἰς with acc. is often used where we should expect ἐν with dat., e.g. ἐβαπτίσθη εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην (Mark i. 9). And it is possible that εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα in Matt. xviii. 20 is equivalent to ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι ἐμοῦ, and means 'in My Name,' i.e. 'with the invocation of My Name.' To equate εἰς with the acc. to ἐν with the dat. may, then, be permissible, but it is certainly not a sound canon of exegesis to lay down that the two phrases *must* always mean the same thing. The important article of Dr. Armitage Robinson in the *Journal of*

not necessarily point to the recitation or invocation of any particular *name*.

We have next to determine the meaning of the phrase βαπτίζεσθαι εἰς τινά in the New Testament. Here we can get no help either from the Old Testament or the papyri, and our only course is to examine the New Testament contexts where the phrase occurs. It may be premised that it is certain that the Jewish practice of baptizing proselytes on their admission to the covenant of Israel dates from prae-Christian times.¹ Thus the passage in which St. Paul says of the Israelities of the Exodus, πάντες εἰς τὸν Μωυσῆν ἐβαπτίσαντο ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ καὶ ἐν τῇ θαλάσῃ (1 Cor. x. 2), did not need explanation of its terms. 'They were baptized into Moses,' *i.e.* they were baptized into the dispensation or polity of Moses; the Cloud and the Waters sealed the nation's adoption of Moses as leader and guide. So in Romans vi. 3 and in Galatians iii. 27, where St. Paul writes of baptism

Theological Studies, vii. p. 186 ff., gives powerful support to the principle that εἰς and ἐν are 'interchangeable' in later Greek, but that does not mean that their force can never be distinguished. See Bishop Chase in the same *Journal*, viii. p. 170 ff.

¹ See Schürer's *The Jewish People*, Div. II., vol. ii. p. 327 ff. (Eng. tr.). The idea of ceremonial washings was familiar to the Jews, and the point in which John the Baptist's practice marked a new departure was that for him there was no thought of technical or ceremonial defilements. With him baptism was εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν: it was the outward symbol of purification from the moral defilements of the heart and conscience. See p. 53 above.

εἰς Χριστόν, he means by that phrase incorporation with Christ : ¹ ' As many as have been baptized into Christ, they have put on Christ.' Or, as he writes elsewhere, εἰς ἐν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν (1 Cor. xii. 13). And, again, we miss the point of the question ἡ εἰς τὸ ὄνομα Παύλου ἐβαπτίσθητε (1 Cor. i. 13), if we do not perceive that to be baptized εἰς ὄνομά τινος is to be incorporated in a man's party and to be numbered among his followers.

Somewhat close parallels to this phrase are, indeed, to be found in Jewish treatises, and the little we know of the ritual of the baptism of proselytes on admission to the Jewish covenant is highly instructive.² The essential requisite in that ceremonial was the presence of witnesses, who played a part afterwards taken by Christian sponsors. There is no evidence that the person baptized then received a new name ; this Christian practice was the natural outcome of the desire to put away every association of the old heathen life, but it is not the essence of the baptismal act, nor was it any part of the ritual of Jewish baptism. The Babylonian

¹ Similarly of the heretical baptism of Menander, Irenaeus says, ' Resurrectionem enim per id, quod est *in eum baptisma*, accipere eius discipulos, et ultra non posse mori,' etc. (*Haer.* i. 23, 5). His disciples were baptized *in eum* (εἰς αὐτόν). Theodoret says the same thing, and notes that Menander's view was σώζεσθαι δὲ τοὺς εἰς αὐτὸν βαπτιζόμενους (*Haeret. Fab.* i. 2).

² See C. F. Rogers in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, xii. pp. 440 ff.

Talmud describes this very briefly : ‘ They baptize him in the presence of two wise men, saying, *‘Behold he is an Israelite in all things.’*¹ The person thus ‘baptized into Moses’ was thenceforth reckoned as a sharer in the covenant of Israel and as one of God’s people. And we find an illustration of the phrase *εἰς ὄνομα τινος* in a curious Talmudic rule about the baptism of children found in the streets : ‘ One finds an infant cast out and baptizes him *in the name of a servant*—do thou also circumcise him in the name of a servant ; but if he baptize him *in the name of a freeman*—do thou also circumcise him in the name of a freeman.’² The meaning of baptizing ‘in the name’ of a servant or of a freeman is, clearly, baptizing ‘into a condition’ of servitude or of freedom. So Maimonides in later times wrote of the baptism of slaves : ‘ Even as they circumcise and baptize strangers, so do they circumcise and baptize servants that are received from heathens *into the name of servitude.*’³

¹ See Ugolini’s *Thesaurus*, xxii. 818.

² *Jerus-Yebamoth*, fol. 8. 4 (לשם עבד). I take the reference from Wall, *Infant Baptism*, Introd. ; but have verified it.

³ *Isuri Bia*, c. 14, *apud* Wall *ut supra*. לשם עבדות are the words. So again in the Babylonian Talmud (*Yebamoth*, fol. 47b) it is said of the baptism of women proselytes that they were baptized לשם שפחות = *in nomen servitutis*. Note that in all these Talmudic quotations we find לְשֵׁם, not בְּשֵׁם, i.e. *in nomen*, not *in nomine*.

I submit, then, that in the language of the New Testament βαπτίζεσθαι εἰς ὄνομά τινος is equivalent to βαπτίζεσθαι εἰς τινά, and that the use of the word ὄνομα proves nothing as to the recitation of any special 'name' accompanying the baptismal act. What Christ enjoined upon the Apostles was that they should, by baptism, bring the nations into His Church and so into contact, as it were, with God. As time went on it was inevitable that the words of Matthew xxviii. 19 should be interpreted as a strict formula to be used at every baptism, and we can see how desirable and even necessary it was that they should be so used to secure a clear understanding of what was being done on the part of baptizer and baptized alike. No words could so clearly exclude heretical intention or innocent mistake. It is possible that the Apostles used them from the first, but of this we have no evidence. The two earliest notices of the explicit recitation of a formula at baptism are found in Justin Martyr and in Irenaeus, and they are worth citing in full.

In his first *Apology* (c. 61) Justin thus writes :
 ἐπ' ὀνόματος γὰρ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων καὶ δεσπότου
 θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ πνεύ-
 ματος ἁγίου τὸ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι τότε λουτρὸν ποιοῦνται . . .
 ἐν τῷ ὕδατι ἐπονομάζεται τῷ ἐλομένῳ ἀναγεννηθῆναι
 . . . τὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων καὶ δεσπότου θεοῦ
 ὄνομα, αὐτὸ τοῦτο μόνον ἐπιλέγοντος (al. ἐπιλέ-

γοντες) τοῦ τὸν λουσόμενον ἄγοντος ἐπὶ τὸ λουτρὸν (no other name can be given to God without impiety) καὶ ἐπ' ὀνόματος δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ σταυρωθέντος ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου καὶ ἐπ' ὀνόματος πνεύματος ἁγίου. It seems to be implied in this passage that the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is invoked over the candidate for baptism. It will be noticed that the phrase used is ἐπ' ὀνόματος and not εἰς ὄνομα.

Next, Irenaeus, speaking of the heretical baptism of the Marcosians, records : οἱ δὲ ἄγουσιν ἐφ' ὕδωρ καὶ βαπτίζοντες οὕτως ἐπιλέγουσιν· εἰς ὄνομα ἀγνώστου πατρὸς τῶν ὅλων, εἰς ἀλήθειαν μήτερα πάντων, εἰς τὸν κατελθόντα εἰς Ἰησοῦν, εἰς ἔνωσιν καὶ ἀπολύτρωσιν καὶ κοινωνίαν τῶν δυνάμεων.¹ This, again, by the word ἐπιλέγουσιν, asserts the use of a baptismal formula among the heretics, and so (by implication) among the Catholics of the late second century.

I do not know of any clear statement of the use of a prescribed formula earlier than these two notices. It is generally asserted, indeed, that in the *Didache* the triple formula is ordered for use ; but an inspection of the passage will show that this inference is highly doubtful : περὶ δὲ τοῦ βαπτίσματος οὕτω βαπτίσατε· ταῦτα πάντα προειπόντες βαπτίσατε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐν ὕδατι ζῶντι . . . ἔκχεον εἰς τὴν

¹ *Haer.* i. 21, 3.

κεφαλὴν τρὶς ὕδωρ εἰς ὄνομα πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος (*Didache*, § 7). Here the words ordered to be said (ταῦτα πάντα προειπόντες) are the previous exhortations about the Two Ways (if, indeed, we may take the *Didache* as a complete work), not the formula 'In the Name,' etc. The *Didache* orders no more than is ordered by Matthew xxviii. 19, viz., baptism 'into the Name' of the Trinity. And it is clear from § 9, where it is said that communicants must be οἱ βαπτισθέντες εἰς ὄνομα κυρίου, that the compiler of the *Didache* regarded it as all one to be baptized 'into the Name of the Lord' and 'into the Name of the Trinity.' So, indeed, it is, if the significance of applying ὁ κύριος to Christ be apprehended; but the two phrases, if they were used as formulae of invocation, could never have been regarded as *identical*.

The only other quotation worthy of note is from *Hermas*, *Vis.* iii. 7, 3, θέλοντες βαπτισθῆναι εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου, which again gives no information as to the use of any formula.¹

The result of the whole investigation is that the words 'baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost' do not necessarily enjoin the use of a formula for recital. They set forth the purpose and effect of Christian

¹ Cf. *Hermas*, *Sim.* ix. 16, 3, πρὶν γάρ, φησι, φορέσαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸ ὄνομα [τοῦ υἱοῦ] τοῦ θεοῦ, νεκρός ἐστιν.

baptism, whereby converts were baptized into the Trinity, *i.e.* taken into close covenant relation with God, revealed in Christ as ‘Three in One.’ It was inevitable that the words should come in time to be used as a formula expressive of the intention of the Church in ministering baptism: but there is no evidence that they were so used when St. Luke wrote the Acts. On the other hand, St. Luke’s phrases, ‘baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus’ and the like are in no way inconsistent with his knowledge of the words in Matthew xxviii. 19; and therefore we cannot argue from the language of the Acts, as some writers have done, that the concluding words of the first Gospel are a later addition to the evangelical tradition of our Lord’s commission to His Church.

CHAPTER IV

THE GATES OF HADES

FEW words of Scripture have received more attention from expositors than the momentous words ascribed in St. Matthew's Gospel to our Lord, in which the great promise was given to St. Peter : 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it' (Matthew xvi. 18). It is not the purpose of this essay to inquire into the doctrinal bearings of this much controverted passage ; I desire to examine the last clause only, with the view of discovering, if possible, what the imagery means. The words are : *καὶ πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύουσιν αὐτῆς*.

The usual interpretation of the phrase 'the gates of Hades' is that it means 'the powers of Hades,' and thus we reach the promise that the powers of evil shall not finally prevail against the Church. No doubt that is the general sense of the passage. But if the thought is of Hades attacking the Church, why are the *gates* of Hades mentioned ? Dr. Plummer exposes the difficulty well. 'If aggressiveness were the prominent idea, we should hardly

have the metaphor of a building with gates. Gates keep people in and keep people out, and are necessary for the strength of a citadel, but they do not fight.' ¹ Dr. Plummer does not offer any complete solution of the difficulty, but he adds that 'it may be doubted whether the rendering *the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it* gives the exact meaning.' He is too sound a scholar to equate 'gates of Hades' with 'powers of Hades,' which latter (or something equivalent) is what the context requires.

Indeed, no evidence, which will bear analysis, is forthcoming for this equation. Alford says that it is 'a well-known oriental form of speech,' but the only justification of this which he offers is that 'the Turkish Empire is known as the Ottoman Porte.' But the fact that the Turkish Foreign Office is sometimes called the 'Sublime Porte' no more proves that *porte*=*puissance*, than the fact that the French Foreign Office is sometimes called the 'Quai d'Orsay' would prove that *quai*=*puissance*. In the East much of the business of a city is transacted at the gate of the city, but there is no eastern form of speech which would permit us to speak of *powers* as gates.

It may be urged, indeed, that we must allow a large latitude to metaphors used in conversational speech, and that it is no less permissible to speak

¹ *An Exegetical Commentary on St. Matthew*, p. 230.

of gates prevailing against a fortress than to speak, as Scott does, of gates pouring forth soldiers.¹ If gates do not 'prevail' in attack, neither do they 'pour forth.' But the point is that in the passage before us, we begin with a quite definite image, viz., a house built upon a rock, and that we cannot speak of the gates of some other building prevailing against it, unless we are prepared to take 'gates' as equivalent to 'powers'—a usage for which there is no parallel.

The phrase 'gates of Hades' is quite common both in Greek and Hebrew literature. In Isaiah xxxviii. 10 Hezekiah says, 'I shall go into the gates of Sheol' (ἐν πύλαις ᾗδου καταλείψω τὰ ἔτη). In Wisdom xvi. 13 we have the confession 'Thou leadest down to the gates of Hades' (κατάγεις εἰς πύλας ᾗδου). In 3 Maccabees v. 51 the Jews in imminent danger of death are said to be 'standing at the gates of Hades' (ἤδη πρὸς πύλαις ᾗδου καθεστῶτας). In these and similar passages πύλαι ᾗδου means 'the gates,' i.e. the vestibule of Hades or the entrance to Hades. And we have exactly the same usage in Homer (αἶδαι πύλαι, *Iliad*, v. 646, *Odyssey*, xiv. 156), and in Aeschylus (αἶδου πύλαι, *Agam.* 1291).²

¹ Bishop Chadwick quotes to me Scott's *The Abbot*, chap. xxxvii., where we read of 'columns of infantry and squadrons of horse which the city gates had poured forth.'

² Cf. also *Psalms of Solomon*, xvi. 2.

Πύλαι, then, means 'gates,' and there is no evidence that it can mean 'powers.' Starting from this, the suggestion has been made (I believe by Bishop Westcott,¹ but I cannot verify the reference) that the idea underlying Matthew xvi. 18b is not that of the Church being attacked by the 'gates of Hades,' but of the 'gates of Hades' being attacked by the Church. In this view, the Church would not be represented as defending itself against assault, but as storming the fortress of Hades victoriously, the gates of the fortress being unable to resist the attack.² Nothing can resist the conquering progress of the Church of Christ. There is something attractive in this interpretation, and it might be thought that it is supported by the early belief in the 'Harrowing of Hell' by the victorious Christ, which finds elaborate expression in the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, otherwise called the *Descensus ad inferos*. In this document, which probably goes back to the second century, the storming of the gates of Hades by Christ is a principal feature. Hades, who is personified, directs the gates of brass to be shut, but it is of no avail, for in the victory

¹ It was made to me independently by the Bishop of Killaloe.

² This interpretation recalls Virgil's account of the gate of Tartarus, which the heavenly powers could *not* break through :

'Porta adversa, ingens, solidoque adamante columnae :
Vis ut nulla virum, non ipsi excindere ferro
Caelicolae valeant.'

—*Æn.* vi. 552.

of Christ the words of the Psalm were fulfilled : ' He hath broken the gates of brass, and smitten the bars of iron in sunder.' ¹ The gates of Hades do not prevail against Christ, and it might be thought that the promise in Matthew xvi. 18b is that they, in like manner, shall not prevail against His Church, in its attack upon the fortress of evil.

It is probably to this conception of Hades as failing in its defence against the Church's offensive, that we owe the Old Syriac rendering of πύλαι ᾗδου as ' gate-bars of Hades,' which is found in Ephraim, and also in the Syriac translation of the *Theophania* of Eusebius.²

But the difficulty in this interpretation is that it does not harmonise with the earlier part of the verse. In Matthew xvi. 18a the Church is conceived as a building established upon a rock. Now a building cannot move forth to fight, any more than gates can. It is plainly the building which is represented as secure against attack or overthrow.

I suggest that the key to the metaphor ³ is to be found in the parable with which the Sermon on the Mount closes—the parable of the Wise Man who built his house upon the rock, 'and the rain

¹ Ps. cvii. 16.

² See Burkitt, *S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel*, p. 30.

³ Origen brings Matt. vii. 24 and xvi. 18 together (in *Matt.* tom. xii., ed. Lommatzsch, iii. 149).

descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not : for it was founded upon the rock.’¹ Or to quote the form in which the parable appears in St. Luke’s Gospel : the faithful hearer is ‘ like a man building a house, who digged and went deep, and laid a foundation upon the rock :² and when a flood arose, the stream brake against that house, and could not shake it : because it had been well builded.’³ St. Matthew’s version is probably an amplification of that in St. Luke, the root idea being that a house which is built firmly upon a rock is not liable to be swept away by floods or torrential rivers.

The Church, according to Matthew xvi. 18, is such a building. The Wise Builder has founded it upon a rock, and the forces of destruction, the spiritual floods of evil, cannot prevail against it.

There are passages in the Old Testament which, although not parallel at every point, contain similar thoughts. The theme of the eighteenth Psalm is, ‘ the Lord is my Rock,’ the Rock of the soul. The floods of Belial (v. 4) beat against the soul, but in its fear the soul calls upon God, who delivers it ‘ out of many waters ’ (v. 16). Thus the righteous soul conquers, and thus alone : ‘ Who is a Rock,

¹ Matt. vii. 24.

² Compare οὐκ ἴσχυσε σαλεύσαι αὐτήν of Luke vi. 48 with οὐ κατισχύουσιν αὐτῆς of Matt. xvi. 18.

³ Luke vi. 48.

beside our God ?' (v. 31). In like manner, in Isaiah xxviii. the powerlessness of the waters of Hades against the Corner Stone of sure foundation is described. The scorners of Jerusalem boasted that they had made a covenant with Death and Hades, so that 'when the overflowing scourge shall pass through' (v. 15), it should not come to them. But the Lord said that He had laid 'in Zion a stone for a foundation' (v. 16) as the only security; the scorners would be overwhelmed by the flowing waters (v. 18).

I have shown in chapter i. how familiar to a Jew was the idea of the forces of evil as an overwhelming flood. The route from Hades, the abode of evil powers, to earth was a waterway. All rivers and oceans are connected with the waters of Hades, the overflowings of which caused the great Flood in the days of Noah. Then it was that the fountains of the Deep (*αἱ πηγαὶ τῆς ἀβύσσου*) were opened¹ for destruction. No more natural way of describing in Hebrew speech an incursion of the infernal powers could be found than to speak of them coming as a flood of devastating waters. The devastations of the Last Judgment were compared by Christ at another time to the waters of the Deluge.² Thus we should have all clear in Matthew xvi. 18 if, instead of *πύλαι*, we had some

¹ Gen. vii. 11.

² Matt. xxiv. 39.

word like ὕδατα or ποταμοί, for the similitude would then be in exact conformity with Matthew vii. 24 = Luke vi. 48, it would be free from confusion of metaphor, and its language entirely Biblical and in harmony with Jewish habits of thought.

There is, however, no variant recorded for πύλαι ᾗδου in Matthew xvi. 18, and any attempt to emend the text, which (as has been shown) does not yield a consistent sense, must be conjectural. It is not possible to arrive at certainty. I would submit with some confidence that a case has been made for challenging the word πύλαι, but what is now suggested further by way of emendation is, of course, only tentative.

It is barely possible that πύλαι is a corruption of πηγαί, the phrase πηγαὶ ᾗδου being then comparable to αἱ πηγαὶ τῆς ἀβύσσου of Genesis vii. 11. This would yield the sense that the context seems to require : ‘ the fountains of Hades,’ the overflowings of the underworld of mystery and evil, ‘ shall not prevail against it.’ But πηγαί and πύλαι are not very like each other in scripts of the first century; and it is more probable that the corruption in the text—if corruption there be—goes further back than the Greek of our present St. Matthew.

Let us ask, then : Is there any Hebrew or Aramaic word meaning ‘ waters,’ or ‘ rivers,’ or ‘ floods,’ or ‘ storms,’ which might be misinter-

preted to mean 'gates' and so mistranslated πύλαι? The answer is that there are two such words, and we must consider separately the two corresponding solutions of our riddle.

1. The precise confusion that we are seeking appears in Daniel viii. 2. Here the Hebrew has: וָאֲנִי הָיִיתִי עַל-אוּבַל אוּלַי, that is, 'I was by the river Ulai.' The word אוּבַל, meaning 'flowing water,' is a rare word, only occurring in this form in Daniel viii. (although we have it in the form בַּל in Jer. xvii. 8; cf. Isa. xxx. 25, xlv. 4). Its stem is אָבַל 'to flow.' In Theodotion's version of Daniel viii. 2, he does not attempt to translate it, and omits it, his rendering being ἡμην ἐπὶ τοῦ Οὐβάλ. But the Seventy translate the words: ὄντος μου πρὸς τῇ πύλῃ Αἰλάμ. That is, the Septuagint at Daniel viii. 2. (and also at vv. 3, 6) translates the Hebrew word אוּבַל, which means 'river,' by πύλη, as if it meant 'gate.' This is exactly the same corruption as that which I suppose to be behind the Greek πύλαι of Matthew xvi. 18. And the corruption is perpetuated to our own day. The Vulgate, following the LXX, has, in Daniel viii. 2, 'super *portam* Ulai'; and in Daniel viii. 6, 'ante *portam*,' although in Daniel viii. 3 it substitutes 'ante *paludem*.' And the Douay English version gives accordingly 'over the *gate* of Ulai,' and 'before the *gate*' in Daniel viii. 2, 6.

That is to say, while the Authorised and Revised versions preserve the correct renderings of the Hebrew ‘by the *river* of Ulai,’ ‘before the *river*’ in Daniel viii. 2, 6, the Douay version preserves the ancient misinterpretation ‘over the *gate* of Ulai,’ ‘before the *gate*.’ In the Douay version, then, we have the word *gate* where we ought to have the word *river*; and the mistake is due, not to any various or aberrant text, but to an ancient mis-translation of a rare Aramaic word. Is it not probable that a similar mistake lies behind the word ‘gates’ in Matthew xvi. 18b?

2. It may be said, however, that אֹבַל is a rare word, and unlikely to have been used in ordinary speech, so that it would be hazardous to assume that it was behind πύλαι in Matthew xvi. 18. We do not perhaps know enough of the conversational Aramaic of our Lord’s public ministry to dogmatise as to what words were or were not likely to have been in use. But there is another, perhaps a simpler, explanation of the presence of πύλαι in the Greek text, which must now be given.

If we were asked to put καὶ πύλαι ἄδου back into Hebrew, we should naturally write יַשְׁעֵי שְׂאוֹל, for שַׁעַר is the ordinary Hebrew word for ‘gate.’ (The text appears thus in Delitzsch’s Hebrew St. Matthew.) But the same word, differently pointed, שַׁעַר, means ‘storm’ in Isaiah xxviii. 2. And it is

specially remarkable that in Isaiah xxviii. 2 the word עַרְשֵׁי is wrongly written עַרְשֵׁי in some Hebrew manuscripts, as Rosenmüller¹ states in his note *in loc.*: ‘In codicibus haud paucis et libris editis pro עַרְשֵׁי legitur עַרְשֵׁי (cum *Schin*) *porta*, quod aegre sensum admittit.’ In other words, in ‘not a few manuscripts,’ as well as in some printed editions of the Hebrew Bible, we have עַרְשֵׁי a *gate* mistakenly read for עַרְשֵׁי a *storm*, which is the true text. This is the identical confusion which I suggest has been made by the Greek translator of the original Aramaic of Matthew xvi. 18. He mistook the letter ע for the letter ש , and this trifling blunder in eyesight led to the introduction of the word πύλαι , which is foreign to the context. The phrase πύλαι ἄδου is, as we have seen, a common Greek expression, while the expression χειμῶνες ἄδου , or πλημμυρίδες ἄδου (cf. Luke vi. 48, $\text{πλημμύρας δὲ γενομένης}$) would not come so readily to the mind of a Greek. The translator, like many modern commentators upon Matthew xvi. 18, had forgotten the metaphor from the Sermon on the Mount, of a building so firmly established upon a rock that the stormy floods beat against it in vain.

But, whatever be the truth as to the Semitic original of Matthew xvi. 18, there can be little

¹ I am indebted to my friend Dr. Hemphill for the reference to Rosenmüller.

doubt that the Greek text is corrupt. Πύλαι ἄδου spoils the metaphor, and does not make good sense. The meaning of the metaphor becomes apparent only when we refer back to Matthew vii. 24=Luke vi. 48 (the similitude of the House built upon a Rock); and then the passage is rendered consistent with itself if we suppose that πύλαι is a mistranslation of an Aramaic word which meant 'waters' or 'rivers' or 'storms.' Two suggestions have been made in this chapter as to how misunderstanding may have been originated. Either of the words שַׁעַר and אֶבְנֵי לִבְנוֹת lend themselves to mistranslation, and it is suggested that one of them was found in the Semitic original of Matthew xvi. 18, the latter word having been actually misinterpreted 'gate' by the Septuagint translator of Daniel viii. 2, and the former word having been misread שַׁעַר instead of שַׁעַר by several scribes and editors of Isaiah xxviii. 2.

One other point ought to be mentioned. Commentators are prone to say that the metaphor of the 'keys of the kingdom of heaven' in Matthew xvi. 19 was suggested by the mention of 'gates' in the preceding verse. But it is not clear that these verses are connected. They are not conjoined by the word 'and,' which the *textus receptus* erroneously inserts. They are separate and distinct sayings: 'Upon this Rock I will build my Church

and the storms (gates) of hell shall not prevail against it': 'I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,' etc. There is a complete change of metaphor, and even if the word 'gates' be retained, the two sayings are best treated as independent of each other. The Rock which is the foundation of the Church is a different image from that of the Steward who holds the keys of the kingdom.

CHAPTER V

ST. PAUL'S DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION

(A STUDY OF 1 CORINTHIANS XV.)

ST. PAUL'S doctrine of the Resurrection lies behind his teaching in every Epistle. It governs his thought throughout, but the fullest presentation of it is given in the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians. The reasoning is so difficult and so intricate that it challenges the attention of every reader, and suggests all kinds of grave questions. Many commentaries have been written upon it, but it is not superfluous to attempt to restate it afresh. For, even though nothing novel can now be said, it is always worth while to examine a great argument of this kind from different points of view. And as every man must approach it from his own angle, no honest attempt to grapple with its difficulties can be quite without suggestiveness to others.

I

In any profitable study of 1 Corinthians xv. we must realise, in the first place, what St. Paul's postulates are, and what it is that he wishes to

prove. He does not attempt to prove here that Christ rose from the dead. That was not disputed by his correspondents. The fact of Christ's Resurrection is, in truth, the pivot of his argument. But he seeks to give an answer to sceptical persons who doubted of their own resurrection. Just as some people say now 'Miracles do not happen,' so some people said then 'Dead persons do not live again' (v. 12). It is this universal negative of despair which he wishes to refute. His argument is not addressed to those who rejected the Revelation of Christ. It is addressed to members of the Corinthian Church (*ἐν ὑμῖν τινές*, v. 12), all of whom had received the Gospel which St. Paul had preached (*ὁ καὶ παρελάβετε*, v. 1). Belief in a life to come may seem to us an essential part of the Christian Faith. But this article was not found in that brief profession of belief which St. Paul rehearses at the beginning of his argument (vv. 3-7), to remind his correspondents of their common starting-point. 'The Life Everlasting' was, indeed, believed in by many, both Jews and Greeks, and the great majority—we cannot doubt—of the early Christian converts accepted it as part of the teaching of Christ. But its necessary connexion with the faith in Christ Risen was not obvious until it was pointed out; and some of the new disciples at Corinth had not per-

ceived it. It is to these persons St. Paul addresses himself, and he begins, as is natural, by a statement, in words that had already become stereotyped by repetition, of the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Jesus. For them, as for him, this was the foundation of the Gospel message.

We are not, then, to think of vv. 2-11 as an attempt to prove the Resurrection of Christ. That was not in question. Nor, accordingly, is it legitimate to regard the list of Christ's appearances after His Resurrection as comprising *all* the appearances of the Risen Lord known to St. Paul. It is not in his mind to give an exhaustive list. It is even conceivable that he is here repeating a traditional summary of these wonderful occurrences—a summary which may have been as familiar to his correspondents as the Apostles' Creed would be in our day to the members of a Church only a few years reclaimed from heathendom. One must begin somewhere, and St. Paul begins here.

II

We enter upon the argument proper at v. 12. It is a fourfold argument of the kind described by logicians as *reductio ad absurdum*. 'If this, which you lay down, is true, then an absurd consequence follows—a consequence which you would be the first to repudiate. Therefore your statement was

not justified, and the proposition you laid down is false.' The proposition in question here is 'Dead men do not rise'; there is no Resurrection of the Dead (ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, v. 12). St. Paul puts in four pleas against this, in vv. 13, 16, 29 and 32 respectively, each of which proceeds, 'If dead men do not rise, then . . . something follows which you recognise as absurd.' We must go through these separately, and be specially careful to distinguish the first of these pleas (in v. 13) from the second (in v. 16), for they are often confused by hasty readers.

I. vv. 13-15. If dead men do not rise, then Christ did not rise, for He was Man, and therefore comes under your universal negative. But if He did not rise, our preaching (κήρυγμα) and your faith (πίστις)—that which we preach and which you believed when you were converted (οὕτως κηρύσσομεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπιστεύσατε, v. 11)—are alike *empty* (κενόν, κενή, v. 14). The 'witnesses of the Resurrection' are liars. The traditional summary of the Gospel which has been recited (vv. 2-8) is *void* of its kernel. But you accept this statement of belief, and therefore *totidem verbis* you recognise an exception to your arrogant universal negative. Christ rose, as you confess. Christ was Man. Therefore you cannot say generally 'Dead men do not rise.' You can build nothing

upon this universal negative, for in fact it is not true.

It will be recognised (a) that the point of the argument rests in the acceptance of Christ's Resurrection by those against whom St. Paul is arguing; and (b) that this answer does no more than indicate the *possibility* of human resurrections. Christ appeared after death. Death, therefore, is not necessarily the end. There is another world beyond. Whether we shall ever reach it or not, at all events there is another sphere of existence beyond the grave. And the demonstration of this is the first and most obvious consequence of the Appearances of the Risen Christ. If the argument stopped short here, all that could be said would be that as Christ has shown by His Resurrection that death is not necessarily the end of life, there *may* be a sphere of activity for us beyond the grave, as there demonstrably was for Him. The universal negative of the sceptically minded may be set aside; but by this train of thought we do not get further in affirmation than a 'Great Perhaps.'

II. The second plea begins like the first; it bases itself on the same postulate; but it is more profound, and more subtle.

If dead men do not rise, then Christ did not rise; and if that be so, your faith is *vain*. St. Paul has already shown that it would be *empty* (κενή); he

now shows that it would be *useless* (ματαιία), and that in three ways. For, if Christ did not rise, (a) 'ye are yet in your sins' (v. 17); (b) 'Those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished' (v. 18); (c) 'If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most pitiable' (v. 19). The Corinthians whom Paul addressed would not accept any of these conclusions, and therefore the premiss from which they all proceed must be erroneous.

(a) ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν (v. 17). Part of the creed which the Corinthians professed was that Christ 'died for our sins' (v. 3). They accepted the efficacy of His Atonement, which implies the Resurrection as well as the Passion. 'He was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification,' as Paul expresses it elsewhere (Rom. iv. 25). No Corinthian convert would have allowed that he was 'yet in his sins'; by denying a future life in general terms he did not mean to deny the justifying virtue of Christ's Death in regard to sin. Yet this denial would follow as a necessary consequence 'if Christ be not raised,' and if His Death, therefore, had been like that of other men.

(b) 'Then they also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.' If 'dead men do not rise' be a universal maxim, it must apply to the dead in Christ as well as to others. But this would be entirely inconsistent with that great conception of

Christ as the Second Adam, which he proceeds to expound (vv. 20-28).

‘By man came death.’ It was a recognised tenet of later Jewish belief that death was the consequence of Adam’s sin (cf. 2 Esdras iii. 21, iv. 30, vii. 48). But ‘by Man came also a Resurrection of the Dead.’ ‘As in the Adam all die, even so in the Christ shall all be quickened.’ In the history of the race, the Fall of Adam was a crisis where a new departure was made. So in the history of the race was the Resurrection of Christ a crisis where a new departure was made. The Fall of Adam was not a solitary and isolated act ; it affected all his descendants ; it was charged with consequences for all those who are ‘in Adam.’ So the Resurrection of Christ was not a solitary or isolated act ; it is charged with consequences for all who are ‘in Christ.’

Those to whom St. Paul writes admitted the Resurrection of Christ to have been a fact. He has argued above (I.) that this shows that at any rate one Man has survived the shock of death, and that therefore there is a world of life beyond the grave. But this argument does not *necessarily* connect the resurrection of the Christian with the Resurrection of Christ, for all that is true of Him is not true of us. He was conqueror of Death in His own case ; but it might be asked, How does that give

consolation to us, who are not as He was ? And so we have here, II. (b), Paul's palmary argument for the future life of the Christian. Rightly understood, Christ's Resurrection carries ours with it. It was not, *e.g.*, like the Vision or Reappearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, which could prove nothing for other men except that two members of the race had in some way survived death. That would be consolatory, in a measure, but it would not be conclusive as to the fate of others. But Christ's Resurrection, if in one aspect—as already hinted in I.—it is *like* the resurrection of all men, in another aspect it is utterly *unlike* all other resurrections. Just as Adam's sin was in one aspect like any other man's sin, but in another aspect quite unique, in that it carried consequences such as cannot be ascribed to any other act of sin, so Christ's Resurrection was, in its deepest meaning and purpose, *unique*. It carried with it the victory over death of all who are 'in Him.' He is the ζωοποιός, the Giver of Life, to all who share in His Life. This is the Pauline reflection of the great pronouncement, 'I am the Resurrection and the Life,' which the Fourth Gospel records of Christ.

It should be observed, before we proceed with St. Paul's reasoning, that he does not here contemplate (vv. 20-23) the future lot of any except those who

have fallen asleep *in Christ*. His argument is to show that the arrogant maxim 'dead men do not rise' cannot be trusted, because, in the first place, Christ rose, and, in the second place, this resurrection of His involves the resurrection of those who share His life.

'In the Christ shall all be quickened' (v. 22). But we are to observe that this 'quickening' is a gradual and orderly process. First came the Quickening of Christ Himself; the next stage shall be the Quickening of His living disciples at the time of His Second Coming (v. 23); and then (and not until then) shall be manifested the Quickening of the dead in Christ (v. 24). The Final Consummation shall be this Conquest of Death, the Last Enemy. Then the words of the Psalm shall receive fulfilment, *He put all things in subjection under His feet* (Ps. viii. 6)—all things, except, to be sure, the Eternal Father Himself (v. 27), to whom even the Christ shall be 'subject' (v. 28). The verses 23-28 are, as it were, parenthetical, and explanatory of the time of the Quickening, which is the theme of the argument of vv. 20-23.

One significant word must be noticed here. The Risen Christ is described twice (vv. 20, 23) as the ἀπαρχή, the Firstfruits, of the future harvest. This word introduces a quite new thought, which is, however, only suggested and is not developed until

vv. 36 ff. The thought is that of the Evolution of Humanity as a growth, like the growth of a seed which issues at last in leaf and blossom and fruit ; the consummation of man's growth is the harvest of the seed implanted in him at the first. Of this harvest, the Risen Christ is the Firstfruits ; the rest of the harvest will be reaped at His *παρουσία* (vv. 23, 24).

II. (a) and II. (b) have now been disposed of. We shall see that II. (c) is treated under IV.

III. v. 29. If dead men do not rise, what is the meaning of the ceremony of Baptism for the dead (*ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν*)? Some of you observe this rite, and thus your own practice shows that you do not really believe in the utter extinction of life at death, which your sceptical negation implies.

Much has been written upon the nature of this Baptism for the Dead, but the evidence is not forthcoming as yet which would enable us to speak with confidence about it. For our present purpose, it is not necessary to determine this obscure question. Whatever the practice was, it involved belief in a future beyond the grave, and therefore St. Paul's *reductio ad absurdum* provided a cogent and relevant argument. *εἰ ὅλως νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται τί καὶ βαπτίζονται ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ;*

IV. vv. 30-34. This is the completion of the argument suggested in II. (c) (v. 19). Its kernel is

in v. 32. If dead men do not rise, why then 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die,' as the prophet represents the careless Jews saying (Isa. xxii. 13). If dead men do not rise—if there is no future, *carpe diem* is the best maxim for life; Epicureanism the true philosophy. But you do not accept this base conclusion; you recognise that there are higher interests than the bodily wants of the present hour, and thus you virtually give the lie to the assertion that there is no future, no resurrection of the dead. The philosophy of Hedonism is well described in the Book of Wisdom, where the foolish reasoners are represented as saying, 'Come and let us enjoy the good things that now are; and let us use the creation with all our soul as youth's possession' (Wisd. ii. 6). But that is not our philosophy. Men do not neglect the pleasures and attractions of this present life unless they look for another. They are not content to endure hardness, unless some future gain is in store.¹ Those who 'painfully serve the Most High . . . are in jeopardy every hour,' as Esdras the prophet expresses it²; and

¹ Cf. Cicero: 'Nemo umquam sine magna spe immortalitatis se pro patria offeret ad mortem' (*Tusc. Disp.* i. 15, 32).

² The Greek is not extant, but the Latin version runs: 'In eo tempore commoratae servierunt cum labore altissimo *et omni hora sustinuerunt periculum*, uti perfecte custodirent legislatoris legem.' (2 Esdr. vii. [89]). The parallelisms between St. Paul and the Apocalypse of Esdras are frequent and unmistakable.

St. Paul uses the same phrase to describe his own strenuous life. 'Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? . . . I die daily . . . I fought with beasts at Ephesus . . . but what advantageth it me if the dead rise not?' (vv. 30-32). One who lived such a life of pain and toil, without any hope of a future, would indeed be 'of all men most wretched' (v. 19).¹ The sanctions supplied by the belief in a future are necessary, he argues, if men are to exercise self-control, self-denial, self-sacrifice. And none of those to whom he appealed would be willing to adopt in its integrity the cynical maxim of Hedonism, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.'

Of the four pleas which have now been examined, the first (vv. 12-18) rests upon the admitted fact that Christ was seen alive after His body had been consigned to the tomb. The information thus given about the spiritual world is comparable with, and in some respects similar to, the evidence which, it is alleged, is afforded by psychical manifestations in our own day. The Easter Epiphanies, if this were all, would be the most signal examples in history of post-mortem appearances or visions of the departed; but they would not be any more than this, except in so far as the circumstances of

¹ Cf. *Apocalypse of Baruch* (xxi. 13): 'For if there were this life only, . . . nothing could be more bitter than this.'

Christ's post-Resurrection intercourse with men point to His being not only a 'spirit,' but still in the 'body.' 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye perceive Me to have' (Luke xxiv. 39). But, apart from this, the mere fact that Christ was seen alive after death does not provide a revelation of the spiritual world differing in kind from any other vision of the departed, although the evidence for it be more cogent in degree than can as yet be produced by the Society for Psychical Research.

But when we proceed to St. Paul's second plea (vv. 16-29) we find that he introduces an entirely new conception of the Resurrection, which he now represents not so much as the *type*, but as the *guarantee* of our own. Here is the characteristic feature of Christian belief about the world beyond the grave; a future life is not only *possible* and *desirable*, but is *involved*, for Christians, in the Resurrection of Christ, who is Himself 'the Resurrection and the Life.' The Risen Christ is not only the Firstfruits of the harvest of Humanity; He is the ζωοποιός, the Life-giver.

To this thought, then, as fundamental in his exposition, he returns at v. 35, after incidental mention of two arguments *ad hominem* against his sceptical correspondents, which are, perhaps, not of equal importance. Whatever was the nature of 'baptism on behalf of the dead' we do not practise

it; and in view of the strenuous and devoted lives of many serious men—Agnostic, Pantheist, Materialist—who have looked for no future reward, it is difficult to lay stress upon the apostle's argument in vv. 31-34, however fully we may recognise its practical effectiveness, not only in his age but in our own. And so we may resume the examination of his conception of Christ as the ζωοποιός, for this is the heart of his reasoning.

III

In vv. 35, 36, he faces the inevitable question, 'How are the dead raised? With what body shall they come?'¹ It is somewhat surprising that his answer should ever have been interpreted as suggesting the identity of the post-resurrection 'body' with the corpse of the departed saint. The revivification of the body of flesh and the reincorporation of the material particles of which it is composed did not, indeed, seem incredible in an unscientific age. The Baptismal Creed of the Church still professes belief in 'the Resurrection of the *flesh*,' a form of words which may be defended but which would certainly not be deliberately chosen now, were the Creed being compiled for the first time. The scientific difficulties of such a con-

¹ Cf. *Apocalypse of Baruch* (xlix. 2): 'In what shape will those live who live in Thy day?'

ception are obvious, and they were noted very soon after Christianity came into contact with Greek culture. For the body of flesh which is buried in the earth is resolved into its elements, and the ultimate particles of which it is composed are diffused again throughout nature in other forms. The process of corruption is a process of transformation into other living organisms. These, in their turn, die and in their turn are resolved into their elements ; and so the process goes on, unceasingly. The particles—to use the popular phrase—which formed the body of Augustine or Dante or Luther have served many purposes and may have been incorporated in many human bodies during the centuries which have elapsed since those great men passed away. Who is to be their owner in the future world ? To whose ‘ body ’ shall they be assigned, for many owned them in the earthly life ? Considerations such as these were pressed by pagan critics—by Celsus upon Origen, and by others upon Gregory of Nyssa ; and once they were formulated, it was felt by the best intellect of the Church that they were unanswerable, and that the crude theory of a literal resurrection of the flesh was incredible.

To be sure, this theory, difficult as it is to accept when explicitly stated, has always had adherents ; and to the present day it strengthens the opposition

that is offered to cremation as a substitute for sepulture, as a means of disposing of the corpses of the Christian dead. For it is vaguely surmised by uneducated people that a body which is burnt is destroyed, while a body which is placed in the kindly earth is preserved until the day of resurrection. There are other motives which operate, no doubt, one being due to the half-formulated conviction that it is less respectful to the body which in the lifetime of its departed owner was 'the temple of the Holy Spirit,' to burn it than to bury it. But whatever other causes may affect modern custom in the matter—and this is not the place to enlarge upon them—the most potent is that gross conception of a literal reinstatement and revivification of the flesh which Origen¹ and Gregory of Nyssa² found themselves obliged to repudiate.

It is not surprising, perhaps, that such a theory should have prevailed among uneducated people in a simple age; but it is remarkable that it should

¹ *c. Celsum*, v. 18.

² Gregory's words are remarkable: 'The question remains: Is the state which we are to expect to be like the present state of the body? Because if so, men had better avoid the hope of any resurrection. For if our bodies are to be restored to life again in the same sort of condition as they are in when they cease to breathe, then the issue of resurrection is an unending calamity. For what spectacle is more piteous than when in extreme old age our bodies shrivel up and change into something repulsive and formless?' (*De anima et resurrectione*, col. 137, ed. Migne.)

have claimed the authority of St. Paul's name. For, as we shall see, the discussion in 1 Corinthians xv. 35 ff. is inconsistent with the opinion that there is material identity between the earthly and the heavenly 'bodies.' The seed is not identical with the fruit. 'That which thou sowest is *not* the body that shall be' (v. 37) is a sufficiently clear statement.

What does St. Paul intend to illustrate by the image of the sowing of the seed? This is a crucial question; for the prevalent misconceptions of his doctrine of the resurrection of the body may, as it seems, be traced to a misinterpretation of this figure. Most commentators, both ancient¹ and modern,² have assumed that the apostle means to illustrate the burial of a corpse by the figure of the sowing of a seed. Even Bengel takes this view. Of *σπείρεται* he says, 'verbum amoenissimum *pro sepultura*.' And the association of St. Paul's words with the sublime Office for the Burial of the Dead in the Anglican Church has done much to confirm this interpretation of his language. But *σπείρειν* is not used elsewhere of burial. And, indeed, the only allusion to the act of sepulture in 1 Corinthians xv. is at v. 4, *καὶ ἐτάφη*. That Christ

¹ *E.g.* Irenaeus, and Chrysostom.

² Prof. Findlay and Dr. Milligan, however, take the view that is advocated in these pages. Cf. also Charles, *Eschatology*, p. 392, and Sparrow Simpson, *The Resurrection and Modern Thought*, p. 329.

was buried was an article in the summary of Christian belief which St. Paul had 'received,' but it is not a point which enters into his argument for the future life. From beginning to end of that argument he does not lay the slightest stress upon burial, or upon any other means of disposing of the corpses of the departed.

Let us look into the language he uses. His opening words, when scrutinised, will be seen to forbid any exegesis which equates *sowing* with *burial*. 'That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die' (v. 36). In the world of nature, that is, there are three stages in the transformation of a seed, viz. *Sowing, Dying, Quickening*; and they succeed each other in this order. The seed is sown *before* it dies, and it dies *before* it is quickened. *Sowing precedes* death in the operations of nature. But the burial of a corpse comes *after* death. There is no analogy between the sowing of a seed which *goes before* the death of the seed, and the burial of a human body which *comes after* the death of that body. We must then put out of our minds the idea that the burial of the dead is comparable to the sowing of the seed, if we are to comfort ourselves with the splendid words, 'That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.' St. Paul's image is the same as that which is presented in the saying of Christ to the Greeks, 'Except a corn of wheat

fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it beareth fruit ' (John xii. 24) ; but in neither passage has the image anything to do with sepulture or burial of the dead, and in both passages the central thought is the same, that the true life of the seed of human faculty can only be reached through death.

We ask, then, what is the significance of the image used by St. Paul ? What does he mean to illustrate by the sowing of the seed ? *When* is sown that human seed for whose quickening we must look beyond the passage of death ? To the question as thus stated, the answer is plain enough. It is sown at our birth ; the sowing of the seed represents the beginning, not the end, of earthly life.¹ ' That which thou sowest is not that body that shall be,' for the fruit is unlike the seed, and the seed must pass through the transformation of death before it can be quickened into the new life of the harvest. And thus to describe the ' sowing,' and the characteristics of this human ' seed,' St. Paul falls back upon the imagery and the language of the earliest chapters of Genesis, where the story of the Creation

¹ Charles (*Eschatology*, p. 393) quotes Calvin to much the same effect : ' *Praesentis vitae tempus metaphorice sationi comparat, resurrectionem vero messi.*' In this view, it is the whole earthly life that is the time of sowing ; but it is nearer to St. Paul's language to compare the sowing-time to birth, and the beginning of the man's career.

of man is told. He has already spoken of Christ as the 'Firstfruits' (v. 23); but he now develops and explains this thought of the harvest, by recalling the conditions under which the seed of humanity was first sown in Adam. The key to the phraseology of vv. 38 ff. is the phraseology of the first chapter of Genesis.

There are many kinds of 'seed' (v. 37), and God gives to each a 'body' as it pleased Him (v. 38); that is, as it pleased Him at the epoch of Creation, the aorist ἠθέλησεν marking a definite moment in the past. There are thus many kinds of 'flesh,' of beasts and of birds and of fishes and of men (v. 39; cf. Gen. i. 20-26). There are also 'heavenly bodies' differing in glory from the 'bodies of earth,' and from each other, that is, the sun, moon, and stars, thus separately created at the first (vv. 40, 41).¹ Observe that this distinction between σώματα ἐπουράνια and σώματα ἐπίγεια is not parallel to the distinction between σώματα πνευματικά and σώματα ψυχικά of v. 44; we have not as yet come to that, and so far the writer is only amplifying his conception of the original diversities of creation, as set forth in Genesis i. In every case, the growth

¹ A close verbal parallel (although no more) is found in the dialogue *Epinomis* ascribed to Plato, (p. 986) μία μὲν [δυνάμις] ἡλίου· μία δὲ σελήνης· μία δὲ τῶν πλανητῶν ἄστρον κ.τ.λ. For once, Wetstein has not noticed this illustration of the Biblical text.

of nature, he suggests, is like the growth of a seed, which goes on to perfection, but which does not receive its full perfection at the first ; the fruit is not the same as the seed, although it springs from it, and there is a diversity of fruit in correspondence with a variety of seed. This, it may be noticed, is substantially the same conception of the natural order that is found in the Apocalypse of Ezra (2 Esdras). The law of growth is set forth in 2 Esdr. v. 44, 'The creature may not haste above the Creator ; neither may the world hold them at once that shall be created therein.' 'So have I given the womb of the earth to those that be sown therein in their several times' (2 Esdr. v. 48). Of the seeds thus sown some are lost : 'As the husbandman soweth much seed upon the ground, and planteth many trees, and yet not all that is sown shall come up in due season, neither shall all that is planted take root ; even so they that are sown in the world shall not all be saved' (2 Esdr. viii. 41). All natural life, in short, including the life of man, is comparable to the growth of a seedling ; and of that growth we know that the supreme law is, 'that which thou sowest is not quickened—does not reach its highest—except it die.' 'Thou shalt mortify it as Thy creature and quicken it as Thy work' (2 Esdr. viii. 13).

Here, cries the Apostle, is the hope of Resurrection

for man : ' so also is the Resurrection of the dead ' (v. 42).

(a) The seed of human faculty is ' sown in corruption, raised in incorruption ' (v. 42). In St. Paul's phraseology the ' bondage of corruption ' (Rom. viii. 21) is the bondage of the earthly life, and at vv. 50, 52 of the present chapter he shows that he looks upon the living body of man as a ' corruptible vessel ' (cf. 2 Esdr. vii. [88]). When he speaks of the seed being sown ἐν φθορᾷ there is no thought of the dead body mouldering in the grave ; that, it must again be repeated, is alien to the context and to the argument. But the perishable living body is, as it were, the soil in which the seed of human faculty is sown and in which it strives to grow during the earthly life. From this bondage it is liberated by Death the great Emancipator, and, dying, it is quickened for the ampler life beyond. ' It is raised in incorruption ' ; henceforth it will live and bear fruit in a freer and more stimulating environment. For, as the writer of the Book of Wisdom puts it, ' God created man for incorruption ' (Wisd. ii. 23). This is the ' redemption of the body ' (Rom. viii. 23) which Paul elsewhere calls our ' adoption.' ¹

¹ Cf. also 2 Esdras vii. [96], where it is said of the blessed dead that ' they have now escaped from that which is corruptible,' and of the future state that in it ' corruption is passed away ' v. [113].

(b) Again it is sown in dishonour, it is raised 'in glory.' 'Passions of dishonour,' *πάθη ἀτιμίας* (Rom. i. 26) is Paul's description of bodily lusts; from these, no less than from the 'bondage of corruption,' the Christian hopes to be delivered when he shall have reached 'the liberty of the glory of the children of God' (Rom. viii. 21). The seed is tainted with sin. 'A grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning' (2 Esdr. iv. 30). But from such dishonouring association the true seed shall be liberated at the Resurrection hereafter; it 'shall be raised in glory.'

(c) He goes on with his great Hymn of Hope. 'It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power' (v. 43). The weakness of flesh (Rom. vi. 19; Gal. iv. 13), and the weakness of spirit, the want of faith (Rom. iv. 19, viii. 26, xiv. 1) which are inevitable conditions of the earthly life, are often before the mind of Paul; but he consoles himself with the thought that 'Power is being perfected in weakness' (*ἡ γὰρ δύναμις ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελεῖται*, 2 Cor. xii. 9). So here, he expresses the conviction that the seed which in this world struggles weakly for its life, shall live anew, strong and vigorous, when it has been quickened through the passage of death.

(d) We reach the climax of this chant of victorious progress, the most illuminating statement of the antithesis between the earthly and the heavenly

life, in v. 44. 'It is sown a psychical body; it is raised a spiritual body' (σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν, v. 44). The former clause of this statement, at least, is based on the express language of Genesis ii. 7, of which indeed it is a paraphrase.¹ 'Man became a living soul.' The creation of Adam is described by the words ἐγένετο εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν, which Paul quotes here (v. 45) and the same may be said of the birth of every son of Adam. At birth he becomes a 'living soul'; he enters into a psychical stage of being; he inherits a 'psychical body,' weak and corruptible, charged with the poison of death, for 'in Adam all die' (v. 22). So much every Jew had learnt from the Old Testament. But the second part of the thesis is not a Jewish tenet; it is disclosed by the Christian revelation. As Paul had said at v. 22 that 'in Christ shall all be quickened,' so he repeats now: 'The last Adam became a quickening spirit.' The antithesis between the 'first' and the 'last' Adam is not a mere temporal antithesis, for ὁ ἔσχατος Ἀδάμ means the Final Man, the Man beyond whom there can be no further progress. It is He who is a Quickening Spirit, although how

¹ The LXX has: ἐνεφύσησεν εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ πνοὴν ζωῆς καὶ ἐγένετο ὁ ἄνθρωπος εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν. It is remarkable that Philo quotes this, at least once, with πνεῦμα for πνοήν (*Quod det. pot. ins.*, 22), and that he adds πνεῦμά ἐστιν ἡ ψυχῆς οὐσία.

this can be is not fully explained by the apostle. But it is clear that to appreciate his meaning in any degree, we must examine the relations between the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, the fit organ and instrument of the *ψυχή*, and the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, the fit organ and instrument of the *πνεῦμα*. And thus we must digress for the moment into psychology and ask what St. Paul thought of the relations between *σάρξ*, *σῶμα*, *ψυχή*, *πνεῦμα*.

IV

In St. Paul's language, the terms 'spirit' (*πνεῦμα*) and 'flesh' (*σάρξ*) stand over against each other, the former standing for that which is highest, the latter for that which is lowest, in man. This is the starting-point of his psychology. The word *ψυχή* is sometimes used by him in the sense of 'individual,' much as we use the word 'soul' (cf. 'Every soul of man that worketh evil,' Rom. ii. 9; 'Let every soul be subject to the higher powers,' Rom. xiii. 1); and it is sometimes used as equivalent to bodily 'life,' *e.g.*, Romans xvi. 4; Phil. ii. 30; 1 Thess. ii. 8. But by St. Paul *ψυχή* is *never* used as the equivalent of *πνεῦμα*, although by the other New Testament writers the distinction between the two terms does not seem to be observed with any precision.¹ With him *ψυχή* never stands for

¹ Cf. Charles, *Eschatology*, pp. 406 f., who has worked this out fully. See Luke i. 47.

the highest faculty in man ; it is rather the ' life ' of man in its non-moral aspect, that is, the life of the flesh. The first man, at the Creation, and every son of man, at his birth, is made a ' living soul.' This *ψυχή* is exhibited in and through the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, which is its vehicle and the theatre, so to speak, of its activities. The *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is the body of earth, with all its acquired habits and aptitudes and powers, which are largely due to the activity of the *ψυχή* and the direction taken by its energies :

For of the soule the bodie forme doth take ;
For soule is forme, and doth the bodie make.¹

This *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is in continual process of decay ; its destiny is death, for it is the theatre of sin. But, nevertheless, it is the Temple of the Spirit of God : *τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐστίν, οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ θεοῦ* (1 Cor. vi. 19). This is what distinguishes man from the lower creatures. As in their case, his *ψυχή* animates the *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, but it is not his sole energetic faculty, or his highest. For he is made in the Divine Image in respect of his *πνεῦμα*, his spirit, that in him which is Divine. Between this and the *σάρξ* there is a perpetual warfare ; and the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is for it an unworthy and embarrassing theatre of action. As things are, the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* is the

¹ Spenser, *Hymn in honour of Beauty*, i. 132.

organ and instrument of the *πνεῦμα*, so far as earthly activities are concerned ; but it is not a fit or perfect ' body ' for the ' spirit.'

This ' spirit '—the true personality—may be ' quenched ' (1 Thess. v. 19) by the influence of base habits ; and it requires to be nurtured with spiritual food (1 Cor. x. 3), with which it can no more dispense than the *ψυχή* can dispense with its natural nourishment. The mental and moral endowments which men prize most—wisdom, knowledge, powers of speech, gifts of healing, faith, hope, love—are pre-eminently *πνευματικά* (1 Cor. xii. 1, 8-10, xiii. 13). All are not of equal value, nor are all equally permanent, but they all belong to the ' spiritual ' part of man. The ' spirit ' cannot fully express itself without their exercise ; and this is true not only of such essential graces as faith and love, but of faculties purely intellectual as well. If we are rightly to pray ' with the spirit ' (*πνεῦμα*) we must pray also ' with the understanding ' (*νοῦς*, 1 Cor. xiv. 15). It is the *πνεῦμα*, the Divine in man, by which Divine things are discerned. The *ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος* does not apprehend the things of the Spirit of God ; that is for the *πνευματικός* (1 Cor. ii. 14, 15). And the reason is given in one sentence in another context : *ὁ δὲ κολλώμενος τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν πνεύμα ἔστιν*, ' he that is joined to the Lord is *one spirit* ' (1 Cor. vi. 17). It is because of the essential

affinity between the human spirit and the Divine Spirit that communion with God is possible. The master-thought of St. Paul is expressed in the two words ἐν Χριστῷ; but it is to be observed that the supreme spiritual condition thus described depends for its possibility upon the presence of the Divine Spirit in man and the kinship of the human spirit with God. St. Paul's doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ (and, as we shall see, his doctrine of the Resurrection of mankind) has its roots in the Hebrew conception of man as made after the Divine likeness in respect of his 'spirit.'

What is the characteristic action of 'spirit,' whether human or divine? And what is its most natural expression? St. Paul gives the answer again and again, and most succinctly at 2 Corinthians iii. 6, τὸ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ. 'The spirit quickeneth,' giveth life. To give life is the characteristic action of πνεῦμα, and its inevitable expression and manifestation is ζωή, the presence of life. As σάρξ is always in process of causing decay, of decease; so πνεῦμα is always in process of giving forth life. This contrast is continually before St. Paul's mind. 'The mind (φρόνημα, the bent and tendency) of the flesh is death, but the mind of the spirit is life and peace' (Rom. viii. 6). It is thus that in the spirit we find our freedom, and obtain release from the iron chains of physical

causation, the bondage of the strongest desire. 'The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and death' (Rom. viii. 2). 'They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. If any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him. But if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; but the spirit is life because of righteousness' (Rom. viii. 8-10). Such thoughts, of spirit as essentially *free* and *life-giving*, lead directly to the thought of continued life when the spirit has asserted its supremacy over the flesh. 'If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you' (Rom. viii. 11). But the Apostle gives no hint here of how he conceives that this 'quickenings' of 'mortal bodies' (τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν) is to be brought about. He approaches this subject somewhat more nearly in Galatians vi. 8, a passage which brings us back to this great illustration of the seed and the harvest in 1 Corinthians xv. : 'He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap eternal life.' We partly make, although we partly inherit, our character ; and the seed sown by ourselves will yield its fruit

just as surely as the seed which was 'sown' at our birth.

V

We now return to the antithesis of 1 Corinthians XV. 44: σπείρεται σῶμα ψυχικόν, ἐγείρεται σῶμα πνευματικόν. 'It is sown a psychical body; it is raised a spiritual body'; the former being the seed of which the latter is the harvest. St. Paul does not say that the ψυχή is the seed of which the πνεῦμα is the fruit; between these, 'the soul' and 'the spirit,' there is no continuity, nor are they really akin. They are sharply contrasted.¹ Still less is the σάρξ the seed, of which the 'spiritual' body is the fruit; the σάρξ has no potentiality of life in it at all. The σῶμα ψυχικόν includes the σάρξ indeed, but it includes more, in the case of humanity; it stands for all that externally is characteristic of the man, his appearance, his gestures, his manner of speech, perhaps even his affections, his intellectual pursuits, his habits, his temper—all, in short, that make up the man as he appears to his fellows in the commerce of life. The σῶμα ψυχικόν is 'the temple of the spirit'; but if the spirit be quenched or starved or repressed by the flesh, then the man is a mere ψυχικός, whereas, to reach his highest, he

¹ The πνεῦμα is directly given by God at the man's birth; compare the passage quoted above (p. 112) from Philo, whose view is that the πνεῦμα is the essence, the οὐσία, of the ψυχή.

should be *πνευματικός*. The variety of 'natural character' is one of the most obvious facts of life, but this is quite consistent with that 'unity of the spirit,' which is one of St. Paul's deepest convictions. That there is only *one spirit* amid all the diversity of human characters is so certain a postulate for him, that he argues from it to the essential unity of the Christian Society (Eph. iv. 4).

Now this *σῶμα ψυχικόν* can only reach its highest, like all other living organisms, through the passage of death. It is not quickened except it die. For the process of death can only destroy that in it which is akin to the flesh; it need not kill those better elements which have such kinship with the *πνεῦμα* that the *πνεῦμα* could tabernacle among them. And the fruit which is the sequel of the seed's death is the resultant of these nobler qualities, quickened more energetically than before by the *πνεῦμα*, which is freed from its old restraints.

Here we begin to see something of the meaning of St. Paul's conception of Christ as the Life Giver (v. 22), of his pronouncement that 'the Ultimate Man became a Life-giving Spirit.' For of Christ was it also true, that the seed is not quickened except it die. Even His Life-giving powers could not find full scope except through the release of death. He 'became a Life-giving Spirit' at His Resurrection, and not in fullest measure until then.

Not until He had passed through the emancipation of death could His Spirit descend in abundant streams of benediction upon His spiritual kindred. Pentecost came after Calvary. *Accipe spiritum sanctum* was the word of power of His Risen Life (John xx. 22). And not until He had passed through death into the glory of the Resurrection could His Spirit be strong to quicken and revive those who had died 'in Him.' This is the Pauline counterpart of the saying, 'It is expedient for you that I go away' (John xvi. 7).

No explanation is given by St. Paul of the mode or manner in which he conceives of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* of the believer being quickened by the action of the *πνεῦμα* of Christ upon the *πνεῦμα* which is the centre of the man's personality. All that he tells us is that this is the secret of the Resurrection of Christ. After death *His σῶμα ψυχικόν* was quickened into the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, 'the body of His glory,' the action of the Divine Spirit being so overmasteringly efficacious, that no sensuous or fleshly element was left behind in the sepulchre. It was transfigured and transformed, the body of earth being in His case, even throughout His earthly progress, a fit habitation for the *πνεῦμα*. For sin had never defiled it, nor had temptation ever thwarted the activities of the spirit of Christ. But even in the best and holiest of His disciples, there is a continual

warfare between the lower and the higher nature, between the flesh and the spirit ; and the spirit is not always victor. When it is victorious, it is in virtue of the grace of the Risen Life of Christ, that is, because of the active co-operation of the Spirit of Christ. The Christian's supreme privilege in this life is that ' even when we were dead through our trespasses [God] quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus ' (Eph. ii. 5). So to live ' is Christ ' (Phil. i. 21). And he of whom this is true may say, ' I live, yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me ' (Gal. ii. 20). The conflict with sin is, as it were, a perpetual Passion, ' always bearing about in the body the dying of Jesus,' but it is in order that ' the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our body ' (2 Cor. iv. 10). Yet this spiritual power is, while we are in the flesh, only ' the firstfruits of the Spirit,' and we are in continual unrest while we wait ' for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body ' (Rom. viii. 23). This ' redemption of the body ' is the fulness of the Christian hope.

Yet the fleshly body has the taint of sin. It is not like the fleshly Body of Christ, pure from sin. And sin has the seed of death. In so far as it is thus tainted, the body of earth cannot survive the passage of death. Thus its ' redemption ' must involve the

abandonment of that which is tainted and corruptible, in order that the worthier elements of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* may be transfigured and transformed into a fit habitation for the spirit. Here is the essential difference between the Resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of Christians. For Him there was no need of a 'redemption' of the body; by the evolution of death, the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* became the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, nothing being left behind as base and unworthy. For us 'redemption' is inevitable, and this involves a laying aside of the flesh, as we know it and have experienced it. In our case, the fleshly body moulders in the grave; but whatever has been best in this earthly habitation of the spirit is to reappear, transfigured, ennobled, strengthened, to serve as the eternal habitation of the spirit hereafter. The *σῶμα πνευματικόν* does not then bear exactly the same relation to the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* in the case of the Christian that it bore in the case of Christ.

Nor is the revivification of the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* in the case of the dead Christian hereafter comparable to the revivification of the dead bodies of Lazarus and the Widow's Son. For, in their case, as would appear from the narratives, the physical process of decay was arrested by a special Divine intervention, and the body to which the life (the *ψυχή*) was recalled by Christ's word was the same body—flesh

and blood—as that which had walked on earth before it was stricken down by death. The body of Lazarus when he was restored to his sisters was not a ‘spiritual body,’ but a ‘psychical body’ still. No such change had passed over it.

In our case, the physical process of decay will not be arrested. Our bodies of flesh will be resolved into the elements from which they sprang. But, for all that, there will be a ‘something’ which will persist, which can be quickened into a larger life only through the passage of death. This ‘something’ is the seed of the spiritual body of the hereafter, and it will be quickened into life by the action of the life-giving Spirit of Christ upon the *πνεῦμα* which has assimilated and attracted and used it as its appropriate organ and instrument. That in our bodies which is akin to earth, to the ‘first man, who is of earth,’ will be left behind us. That which is akin to heaven, to the ‘second Man, who is of heaven,’ will be retained. ‘As we have borne the image of the earthly, so we shall bear the image of the heavenly.’ Our bodies shall be ‘conformed to the body of His glory’ (Phil. iii. 21). Such seems to be the teaching of St. Paul about the ‘spiritual body.’

VI

At v. 50 the Apostle proceeds to give the answer to a question which the foregoing discussion would

naturally suggest. He has explained that the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* of the future will not be identical with the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* of the present. How then will it be with those who are alive at the time of Christ's Parousia? *Their* 'quickenings,' as he said at v. 23, must precede the quickening of the dead in Christ. But 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God' (v. 50); how then are they to share in the heavenly life? The answer, he says, is a *μυστήριον*, a secret that has been revealed to him. It could not be argued out on grounds of reason alone. But this is the answer. It is indeed the case that 'we shall not all sleep,' but 'we *shall* all be changed'—not through a gradual and invisible transformation like that of the seed in the earth, but *ἐν ἀτόμῳ*, in an instant, upon the sounding of the 'last trumpet' (v. 51). For in the Day of the Parousia 'the trumpet shall sound,' as the ancient apocalypses had told (2 Esdr. vi. 23; cf. Matt. xxiv. 31). And then not only shall 'the dead be raised incorruptible,' but we who are living at the time 'shall be changed' (v. 53). The evolution of the 'natural' into the 'spiritual' body shall take place, instantaneously and not gradually, as in the case of the dead. This is the *μυστήριον* of the portion of those 'in Christ' who are alive at the time of His Second Coming.

This, then, is the consummation. As he said in

v. 23, Christ is the firstfruits of the Resurrection harvest ; next are His living disciples ; last of all the company of the blessed dead. This shall be the complete fulfilment of the prophet's words : ' Death is swallowed up in victory ' (Isa. xxv. 8). Another prophet had asked : ' O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? ' (Hos. xiii. 14), as he thought of the irresistible might of Jehovah. But the secret of the victory is clearer now. It is ' through our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Having this hope, be steadfast, for earthly labour is not in vain, if it be ' in the Lord ' (v. 58). Every act and thought leaves its trace ; it affects that *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, which is the precursor of the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, the companion of the spirit in the world which flesh and blood cannot inherit.

CHAPTER VI

THE EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

THE Resurrection of Jesus Christ has been from the first a principal article of the Christian creed. 'If Christ be not risen, then is our message vain,' is a sentence which, in some sense, would have been accepted by every Christian apologist since the days of St. Paul. He was not afraid to make Christianity answer with its life for the truth of the Resurrection of Christ, and upon this issue the controversy between Christianity and its opponents has generally turned. It is not possible to exaggerate the importance of its decision, and (although I have nothing novel to urge) I propose to review some of the objections which have been urged against this article of the Catholic faith, and to recapitulate some of the considerations which support the belief of Christians that Jesus rose from the dead.

It will be admitted by all who have any knowledge of Christian history that the most fundamental and essential point of Christian belief has always been the conviction that Jesus Christ is living, and not dead. Whatever may have been disputed, this

has always remained unquestioned by those who profess the Christian name. The conviction which has inspired Christian endeavour and Christian hope from generation to generation is the conviction that the Master of Christians is still alive ; that He hears those who approach Him in prayer ; that He is powerful to redeem and to bless ; that His ministry was not ended by His death, but that it is still continued on earth and in heaven. The primitive Christians rested all their hopes on the belief that Jesus was a living Master. This is clearly set forth in every New Testament document, and it has always been confirmed by the spiritual experience of those who have learnt to pray. This is our starting-point. From the beginning Christians have believed that ' Jesus lives.'

It is hardly less clear that the reason why the first preachers of the Gospel held this to be true was that they believed that He had appeared on earth after His death. Their conviction of His continued grace did not rest solely on a general belief in an immortality into which they supposed Him, though invisible, to have entered. It was rooted in the experience of His most intimate earthly companions, who bore witness that He had been seen by them after His Body had been laid in the tomb of Joseph. One of the distinctions of the members of the Apostolic band was that they had been ' witnesses '

of the Resurrection. When the place of Judas was to be filled, an essential qualification was deemed to be that the new 'Apostle' should be one of those who had seen the Risen Christ. Nothing could indicate more clearly the importance to the first believers of the fact that Christ had risen. They believed that 'Jesus lives' because they believed that Jesus rose. We may distinguish, with Harnack, between the Easter Message and the Easter Faith; but it is certain that the latter, in the first instance, depended upon the former. We are still on solid ground. No sober critic challenges the good faith of the primitive believers as to their witness, although he may think that they were mistaken. Theories of fraud cannot be sustained. Dr. Schmiedel may be taken as representative of the modern school of critics who deny Christ's Resurrection; and these are his words: 'The followers of Jesus really had the impression of having seen Him. The historian who will have it that the alleged appearances are due merely to legend or to invention must deny not only the genuineness of the Pauline Epistles, but also the historicity of Jesus altogether.'¹

¹ *Encycl. Bibl.*, iv. 4061. Schmiedel rightly abandons as quite unsatisfactory the theory that the Body of Christ was quietly removed from the tomb of Joseph—perhaps by the owner (*l.c.* 4066). This idea, which is adopted by Holtzmann (*Life of Jesus*, English translation, p. 499), was given a wide currency some years ago in a sensational novel, but it is not

We have, then, to inquire what evidence remains to us of these apparitions of the Christ after His burial which satisfied His disciples that He was really alive, and that He had conquered death after a fashion which justified their worship of Him as the Prince of Life. It must be borne in mind that while the belief in Jesus as a Living Master would be abstractedly possible *now* to any one who believes in a life after death, whether he accepts the fact of the Resurrection or not, the Apostolic belief in Christ's sovereignty rested, in fact, upon the conviction that He had given proof by His manifestations of Himself after death of a victory over death which was quite unique and extraordinary. St. Paul's affirmation that Christ was 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead,'¹ is in accordance with the whole tenor of the Apostolic witness. Throughout the Pauline writings not only is the Resurrection of Christ regarded as a fact of such certainty that it may be used as the ground of symbolic language as to the new life possible to the Christian believer,² but

worth discussing at length. It is on a par with the curious theory attributed (perhaps in irony) to the unbelieving Jews in Tertullian, *De Spectac.* (§ 30), that the gardener had removed the Body of Jesus lest the crowds going and coming might trample his lettuces.

¹ Rom. i. 4.

² *E.g.* Rom. vi. 4; Phil. iii. 10; Col. iii. 1.

incidentally it is mentioned again and again as the guarantee of the doctrine of the sovereignty and redeeming power of the Saviour.¹ It is unnecessary to rehearse the passages in which St. Paul finds in the Resurrection of Christ the pledge of immortality for the Christian²; but it should be noticed that (as has been explained in the preceding chapter) even in the great Resurrection homily in 1 Cor. xv. no attempt is made by the Apostle to *prove* that Christ rose from the dead. That was not, for him and for his correspondents, a matter of dispute. Some of those to whom he wrote were in doubt as to their own future life, and he appeals to Christ's Resurrection as the confirmation and guarantee of hope, but he does not stay to prove that it took place. His argument has already been analysed, but it is important to note here that we entirely misapprehend it if we suppose that 'the Resurrection of Jesus was disputed' at Corinth.³ There is no hint anywhere that such was the case. St. Paul's argument throughout the chapter presupposes Christ's Resurrection as a fact and builds upon the universal belief of his correspondents in it. He reminds them that it is part of the Christian tradition which he had received and preached that

¹ *E.g.* Rom. iv. 25, viii. 34, xiv. 9; 2 Cor. v. 15.

² *E.g.* 1 Cor. vi. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 14; 1 Thess. iv. 14.

³ *Encycl. Bibl.* iv. 4057.

Christ 'rose the third day, according to the Scriptures,' and that He appeared to Peter, then to the Twelve, after that to above five hundred brethren once for all (ἐφ'άπαξ), of whom the majority were living when he wrote ; after that to James, then to all the Apostles. He adds that Christ had also, last of all, appeared to himself ; but this is not part of the tradition to which he appealed, although it was a fact of which he was quite certain. Now we must observe that this enumeration does not pretend to be exhaustive, nor do St. Paul's words permit us to infer that he had heard of no other appearances of the Risen Christ. He is not marshalling these incidents as evidence ; he is merely rehearsing briefly the main facts, as well known to his correspondents, and as generally expounded by Christian teachers. These, then, were part of the Christian tradition when the Church of Corinth was founded—that is, about 50 A.D. ; and not only so, but they were part of the tradition which St. Paul 'received' after his conversion—that is, as early as 35 A.D.

It is instructive to note the position and quality of the several witnesses enumerated in this stereotyped statement. We have, first, Peter, the leader of the Twelve, who is represented in the Acts as assuming the foremost place naturally and at once. This apparition to St. Peter is also mentioned by

St. Luke.¹ Then we have the 'Twelve'—*i.e.* the band originally chosen by the Lord as His companions. Of course, the number is not precise, for Judas Iscariot left them before the Passion; but the old designation remains in use. It is natural to identify the incident to which St. Paul refers with the appearance to the Ten in the upper chamber on the evening of the Resurrection,² or with the appearance to the Eleven (Thomas being present) a week later.³ But it is perhaps more correct to say that St. Paul's ὡφθη τοῖς δώδεκα would cover both these incidents, for, as has been said, the *number*—twelve—cannot be pressed. It is the manifestation of the Lord to the assembled company of His selected companions that is the point, and the absence of St. Thomas on the day of the Resurrection seems to have been what is called an accident; and so, even if others were present on the first of these occasions, as St. Luke's language (τοὺς ἑνδεκα καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς) has been thought to imply,⁴ the

¹ Luke xxiv. 34.

² Luke xxiv. 36; [Mark] xvi. 14; John xx. 19.

³ John xx. 26.

⁴ Luke xxiv. 33. This inference is not certain. St. Luke's report is much condensed, and it does not follow because others were present when the two disciples returned from Emmaus (xxiv. 33) that they were present later on when the Lord appeared. Between vv. 35 and 36 an interval may well have elapsed, as is suggested by the paragraphing in Westcott and Hort's Greek Testament.

significance of the appearance would rest in the recognition of the Lord by His chosen friends. This was from the first regarded as of fundamental importance, it being the recognition 'by witnesses chosen before of God . . . who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead' ¹

St. Paul next recalls an appearance to 'more than five hundred brethren once for all.' *ἐφάπαξ* can hardly mean 'at once' or 'simultaneously,' as it is generally translated, but is rather 'once for all.' ² They saw the Lord together, indeed, for that is implied in the form of the sentence: as *ὥφθη τοῖς δώδεκα* means that He appeared to the 'Twelve' when in company, so *ὥφθη ἐπάνω πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς* means that He appeared to a body of more than five hundred persons, not that there were several separate visions, now to this small party, and now to that. But *ἐφάπαξ* implies that the occasion in question was the only one on which this large company of disciples had so wonderful an experience. Of this manifestation we have no other certain record. But it is apparent that it must have been in Galilee, for in Jerusalem the Lord had not so many adherents. Even after the Jewish believers were convinced of His Resurrection they did not muster more than one hundred and twenty.³ And, according to St.

¹ Acts x. 41.

² Cf. Rom. vi. 10; Heb. vii. 27, ix. 12, x. 10.

³ Acts i. 15.

Mark (followed by St. Matthew),¹ the women at the tomb were assured that Christ would appear in Galilee, the announcement suggesting that a signal and notable manifestation would there be given. It is not unreasonable to find a record of this in the account of the Appearance to the Five Hundred, and to identify it, as some have done, with the incident in Matt. xxviii. 16 f. St. Matthew, indeed, tells only of 'the eleven disciples' going into Galilee, unto the mountain which Jesus had appointed, but he goes on to speak of 'some' doubting² when they saw Him. It is difficult to resist the inference that he knew that others besides the Eleven were present, and that those who doubted *after* they saw Him (a hesitation far beyond anything recorded of St. Thomas) were persons who had not known Him with the intimacy that was the privilege of the Twelve.

We next come to the appearance to James—that is, James, the Lord's 'brother,' who was the official head of the Church at Jerusalem.³ St. Paul never mentions James, the son of Zebedee, who fell a victim early to Herod's persecution.⁴ Of this appearance we have no notice in the Gospels; ⁵ but

¹ Mark xvi. 7 = Matt. xxviii. 7, 10.

² Matt. xxviii. 17.

³ Acts xii. 17, xv. 13; Gal. i. 19, ii. 9.

⁴ Acts xii. 2.

⁵ The account of it in the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews,' preserved by Jerome (*Vir. ill.* 2) is destitute of any historical authority. 'The Lord, after He had given the cloth to the

it is instructive to observe how it falls in with what we are told of the Lord's 'brethren.' That they 'did not believe in Him' during the days of His public ministry is recorded in the Fourth Gospel,¹ and so it is somewhat surprising to find them after the Ascension among the little company of believers,² and to hear of one of their number as the president of the Church assemblies at Jerusalem.³ But if the Lord appeared to James during the days after the Resurrection the explanation is not far to seek. The incredulity of His 'brethren' could not persist in the face of so wonderful and gracious a sign, guaranteed to them by the testimony of one of their own family; and the Church singled out for honour one who had been so highly favoured by the Church's Lord.

St. Paul adds that Christ appeared to 'all the Apostles,' the title being used in its wider meaning. St. Paul never confines the term *ἀπόστολοι* to the Twelve (although this restricted meaning appears

slave of the priest, went to James and appeared to him; for James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which the Lord [reading *Dominus*] had drunk the cup until he should see Him rising from the dead; and again, after a little, "Bring, saith the Lord, a table and bread," and immediately there is added, "He brought bread, and blessed and brake, and gave to James the Just, and said to him, My brother, eat thy bread, because the Son of Man has risen from them that sleep."

¹ John vii. 5; cf. Mark iii. 21.

² Acts i. 14.

³ Acts xv. 13.

elsewhere in the New Testament),¹ and here he distinguishes clearly an appearance to the Twelve from an appearance to the Apostles. The manifestations in this list being set down in chronological order, it is not fanciful to identify the incident to which St. Paul refers here with the manifestation of Christ before the Ascension.² We could not, indeed, confidently infer from the Gospel accounts of the Ascension that others were present besides the Eleven; but Acts i. 22, which speaks of those who had companied with the Eleven from the beginning until 'the day that He was received up,' would seem to justify the inference which St. Paul's language suggests.

The final manifestation which St. Paul mentions was not included in the traditional list which he quotes. It was guaranteed for him by his own private experience; and, highly significant as it was and is, it does not come within the cycle of appearances which we have under examination; it was later than the others, and formed no part of the groundwork of the Church's faith at the beginning.

We should note at this point how remarkable a series of witnesses is here incidentally marshalled. The 'Twelve,' 'five hundred brethren,' 'all the

¹ *E.g.* Rev. xxi. 14 (possibly also ii. 2); Jude 17; 1 Peter i. 1; 2 Peter i. 1; iii. 2, and regularly in the Acts.

² Luke xxiv. 50 f.; Acts i. 6 f.; [Mark] xvi. 14 f.

Apostles'; these are groups as to which there could be no mistake. And Peter¹ and James were, at the time of writing, the two most prominent persons in the Christian society, St. Paul himself not being excepted. That *these* witnesses of the Risen Christ should—even if there were others—be regarded as the principal witnesses, to whom the final appeal might always be made, is not difficult to understand. The three recorded appearances of the Risen Christ of which there is no mention in this summary—that to Mary Magdalene,² to the two travellers to Emmaus,³ and to the Seven at the Sea of Tiberias⁴—have no more than a *private* significance. Mary's witness would not count for much in the mind of a Jew; and (in fact) the testimony of the women was not credited at first. The two travellers were not men of any special consequence, so far as we know. The appearance to the Seven in John xxi.—whether it be described by John the son of Zebedee or no we need not now inquire—is not of the same order as an appearance to the Eleven, or to the whole body of Apostles, or to the assembled Galilean believers. It is quite intelligible that these occur-

¹ The importance attached to this manifestation appears from the fact that it convinced the Apostles when the report of the women had failed to do so. 'The Lord is risen indeed (ᾠντως) and hath appeared unto Simon' (Luke xxiv. 34).

² [Mark] xvi. 9; John xx. 14; Matt. xxviii. 9.

³ Luke xxiv. 13; [Mark] xvi. 12.

⁴ John xxi. 1.

rences, important as they were, should not be recalled in the stereotyped summary of the testimony to the Resurrection of Christ which St. Paul quotes. And when Dr. Schmiedel urges that if St. Paul had known of any other appearances of Christ he would have mentioned them in 1 Cor. xv. 5 f,¹ he not only betrays his misapprehension of the point which St. Paul endeavours to establish—viz. the Resurrection of Christians, not the Resurrection of Christ—but he fails to recognise that the Apostle is here quoting a formulated statement which he had ‘received.’ It is a statement of testimony which in any other field of history would be regarded as of extraordinary weight, whether we have regard to its official character, its numerical strength, or the status of the persons who offered it. Even if, for the moment, we lay aside whatever corroboration for its details can be discovered in the Gospels, and decline to enter into the problems which a comparison with the Gospels suggests, we have in this short passage of 1 Corinthians a statement of evidence for the Resurrection of Christ which cannot be neglected by the impartial historian.

An attempt has been made, indeed, to explain away this witness by supposing that, although those who gave it were entirely sincere, yet they

¹ *Encycl. Bibl.* iv. 4057, 4058.

were misled by visions of a disordered and ecstatic imagination, which had no objective counterpart. Peter and the rest of the Apostles, not to speak of Mary Magdalene, *thought* that they saw the Lord, when in reality they saw nothing but a picture which they had created for themselves. And so, as Renan put it ; ‘ *Ce qui a ressuscité Jésus, c’est l’amour.*’ The inadequacy of this theory has often been exposed, but as attempts are sometimes made to revive it a few sentences must be devoted to the point.

1. That in circumstances of unusual excitement men have believed that they saw visions, when in truth there was nothing to see—no objective reality corresponding to the mental image—is, doubtless, quite true.¹ Such delusions have been experienced, and may be experienced again. But in all such cases there is a mental predisposition to see the vision in question. It is hoped for, prayed for, expected ; and then it is seen. Now, there is no shadow of foundation for supposing that the Apostles expected to see the Lord again on earth. To all seeming the Cross was the end of His ministry. To find in Peter’s remorse for the denial of his Master² the inspiration of his vision is the refuge of despair.

¹ The theory of ‘visions’ is as old as Celsus, and is considered and refuted by Origen (*c. Cels.* ii. 60).

² *Encycl. Bibl.* iv. 4085.

A theory which needs such an hypothesis to prop it up is weak indeed. There is no trace anywhere in the New Testament even of a lingering hope in the minds of the followers of Jesus that they should be gladdened by His return to them after His shameful death.¹ There was no expectancy such as might, under extraordinary conditions, mistake the wish for the fact.

2. Nor is this all that can be said ; for if there *had* been such a predisposition, such a wonderful faith that it could survive the Cross and the burial, it is difficult to understand how it could have escaped record in the Gospels. Arguments *e silentio* are precarious, certainly ; but it is legitimate to lay stress upon the omission of a circumstance so agreeable to evangelical piety and so honourable to the faith of the Eleven as the expectation of the Resurrection would have been. But the Evangelists, on the contrary, are explicit as to the incredulity of the followers of Jesus, even when they had been assured that the Lord was risen.²

3. Those who speak of the delusions of the imagination must be asked to note that this is not a case of a vision seen by this or that individual,

¹ This is in marked contrast to the view of the position indicated in the passage cited above (p. 134) from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, in which James is represented as looking for a Resurrection of his Master.

² [Mark] xvi. 11, 13 ; Luke xxiv. 11 ; John xx. 9, 25.

but of a vision seen by companies of persons—the ‘Twelve,’ the ‘five hundred,’ the ‘Apostles.’ Christian apologetic may have made too much of this in the past, for there are undoubted instances on record of ‘collective’ delusion, an idea conceived by one ardent soul being transmitted by the contagion of sympathy to others, until all are ready to bear witness that they have experienced the like. But such instances are rare, and in every case where they have been observed conditions were present which predisposed and prepared the minds of the assembly for the experience in question. A plurality of witnesses increases manyfold the difficulty of explaining, as the creation of subjective fancy, the fact to which they bear testimony.

4. And, not to delay longer upon this part of our inquiry, it is necessary to explain, on the ‘subjective visions’ theory, why it was that they ceased when they did, and were experienced no more. That a vision which was entirely the product of a deep attachment to the Lord should take the form which the first believers have left on record in the story of the Ascension is not credible from the psychological point of view ; for, without pressing here any details of that story, it amounts to this—that a company of men who had wrought themselves to such a pitch of enthusiasm that they simultaneously had visions of Jesus when He was not there,

learnt from one of these visions to expect to see Him no more. So completely was the lesson learnt that their unruly imaginations were forthwith brought under the control of reason, and their amazing experiences came to an end. That is not the course which a disordered fancy pursues. As Keim has it, 'the spirits that men call up are not so quickly laid.'

I conclude, then, that the theory of subjective visions is insufficient to account for the facts, and that there must be recognised behind the recorded phenomena the operation of some force external to the minds of the witnesses. In other words, starting from the testimony of St. Paul, and laying no stress, for the moment, on any of the incidents recorded in the Gospels, we are led to the conclusion that the visions of the Risen Lord were *objective*—that is, they were due to an impression made upon the senses of the witnesses *ab extra*.

It is probable that every one who recites the Creed, no matter what be the degree of laxity which he permits himself in the interpretation of its clauses, would agree with this conclusion. Various attempts, however, have been made to explain the article 'He rose again from the dead' in a manner less difficult of credence than that which the Christian Church has been accustomed to expound, and although I do not think that any of the

modern theories of the Resurrection furnish a substantial aid to faith, it is right that they should have a hearing. Keim, for example, holds that the impression upon the minds of the witnesses was produced by the direct volition of God, who thus confirmed and certified their belief in Jesus as the Lord.¹ A 'telegram from heaven' was sent, as he puts it, and it took the form of a vision of the Christ. It is clear—and the fact ought to be recognised—that this theory is fundamentally different from that which appeals to individual hallucinations as the spring of Easter joy; for it traces the Church's faith in the Risen Christ to the act of God, and not to the easy credulity of man. But it is not so clear that this can afford any relief to those who stumble at what is called the 'miraculous,' for it presumes the intervention of the spiritual in the physical order, and that, precisely, is the difficulty in every 'miracle.' And there is the further difficulty—to me I confess insurmountable—that Keim's hypothesis requires us to believe that the faith of the Christian Church is based upon a revelation from Almighty God which was, in fact, misleading and untrue.

It may be said, however, that account should be taken of St. Paul's omission to tell of any such intercourse of the Risen Christ with His followers

¹ *History of Jesus of Nazara*, by T. Keim [E.T.], vi. 364.

as the Gospels, written at a later time, describe, when they relate that He spoke to them, that He was touched by them, that He ate and drank in their company. Now it is undoubtedly the case that St. Paul tells of no such occurrences : the word *ὥφθη* implies only that Christ was *seen*. But what does this avail in regard to the objectivity of His presence ? If He were seen in reality, and not only in imagination, He must, Himself, have been present. It has been asserted, indeed, that it would be ' contrary to the nature of a being appearing from heaven ' ¹ that He should be touched or that He should eat. But what are the grounds for such an assertion ? Are we to be told that the sensation of *touch* demands an objective counterpart, after a fashion which is not demanded by the sensation of *sight* ? Such crude psychology, or physiology, cannot stand for a moment. It is quite consistent to say that the Christ was neither seen, heard, nor touched—that nothing was present but the creation of the fancy of the witnesses. That is an intelligible theory, and it has already been examined. But to hold, as some critics seem to suggest, that the senses of touch and hearing require a material object to stimulate them, in a degree which is not required by the sense of sight, is quite unphilosophical. If Christ were really *seen*, there is no

¹ *Encycl. Bibl.* iv. 4062.

reason, so far as psychology can tell, why He should not be really *touched* and *heard*. The act of vision is quite as intimately associated with material processes as is the act of touch or of hearing ; and, on the other side, the true visibility of the Christ demanded a materialisation, so to speak, of His Personality quite as much as speech or the act of eating.¹ We are deluding ourselves with a crude and unscientific and self-contradictory theory if we suppose that it is possible to believe that Christ was seen, yet impossible to believe that He was touched or heard. This *via media* between the Christian doctrine of the Resurrection and the theory of subjective visions only leads to a veritable quagmire of difficulty, from which there is no escape. The questions whether Christ spoke to His followers after He was risen, and whether they

¹ The text 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God ; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption' (1 Cor. xv. 50) has been quoted, indeed, to prove that St. Paul had never heard of Jesus eating or being touched after He was risen. But thus to interpret the apostle's words is not sound exegesis. As we have seen on a previous page (p. 124), St. Paul here introduces the point that those who are alive, in the 'natural body,' at Christ's Second Advent must be 'changed' and put on immortality before they can inherit His kingdom. But the words have nothing to do with the nature of Christ's 'Spiritual Body' or the powers with which it was endowed, although they might be taken to suggest that His 'Natural Body' could not, untransfigured and unchanged, have been assumed into the heavenly places.

touched Him, are questions which must be decided by the available evidence, which shall presently be rehearsed ; but they cannot be ruled out of court by any one who believes that He was actually seen.

Nor, once more, do we give due weight to St. Paul's language if we regard it as witnessing to nothing more than visions of Jesus after His Body had been laid in the tomb. There is a considerable amount of evidence for apparitions of the departed, and although I am not prepared to urge that any modern instance has been as fully authenticated as the appearances of our Lord to the Apostles, yet it would be too much to say that the industrious investigations of science may not be competent in the future to furnish independent proof that visitations from the unseen world have been observed. And it has been supposed by some persons that the visions of the Risen Christ were phenomena of this character, and that they were no more 'miraculous' than the apparitions of the dead which from time to time men believe that they have seen. In this view they were objectively real, indeed ; but they had no further significance than could be found in the assurance which they gave the sorrowing disciples that their Master was still living in the world of spirits. And in this connexion emphasis is laid on St. Paul's omission to

mention the empty tomb. He 'knows nothing' of it is the current phrase. It is upon Christ's appearance *as spirit* that he rests his hopes ; and it is to this that he points the sceptics at Corinth. The story that the Body which was laid in the tomb of Joseph was revived is no part of St. Paul's teaching ; that was a later development, which we find in the Gospels and the Acts.

An analysis has been given in a previous chapter of St. Paul's palmary argument for the future life of Christians ; and it is apparent, as I believe, that he did not regard the visions of the Risen Christ as of precisely kindred import to the apparition of a dead hero or saint. Christ's Resurrection had for St. Paul a significance beyond its incidental revelation of the truth that men may live on after death ; to him—whether he were right or wrong—it had a *cosmic* significance. He accepted in a very literal sense our Lord's claim to be Himself 'the Resurrection and the Life.' As the ancient text, 'The first Adam became a living soul,' ($\psi\upsilon\chi\acute{\eta}$)¹ marks the crisis of man's creation, so 'The second Adam became a life-giving spirit' ($\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha$) marks the crisis of man's redemption, soul and body. For St. Paul Christ's victory over death did not reside merely in the fact that His spirit lived on—as the spirits of the just live on—in the world

¹ Gen. ii. 7, quoted 1 Cor. xv. 45.

beyond the grave, but also in the transmutation of the mortal body of the flesh into the immortal body of the spirit, and in the demonstration thus given that the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* may be but the forecast of the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*.¹ The *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, which is our portion in our earthly progress, is as the seed of which the fruit is the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* of the future. The former is not like the latter, indeed, for the seed is not like the fruit nor the end like the beginning. But as in the creation of Adam is the first seed of our race, sown afresh at each man's birth, so in the Resurrection of Christ is the first-fruit of our redeemed humanity, to be reaped again and again in the resurrection of the saints.

It is not too much to say that, although St. Paul does not make explicit mention of the empty sepulchre, his argument presupposes the belief that the 'Natural Body' of Jesus had not been abandoned to the dissolution of death. Precisely at this point is there a difference between the Resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of His followers. For them the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* moulders in the dust, while they await the *σῶμα πνευματικόν*

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 46. I have not entered into the inquiry as to *how* our Lord's Body was raised from the tomb, or how it was withdrawn from the graveclothes. Those who desire to pursue this question—the answer to which is, perhaps, not within our knowledge—will find it suggestively and reverently discussed by the late Mr. Henry Latham in *The Risen Master*.

of the future life. But if Christ's 'Natural Body' had remained in the grave, no demonstration had been given in His Resurrection of that continuity between the *σῶμα ψυχικόν* and the *σῶμα πνευματικόν* which is implied in St. Paul's train of thought.¹ To be certified that there is such continuity is what men desire, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ was unique because, in providing this assurance, it is 'the promise and the potency' of the resurrection of those who are in Him. It was not upon the apparitions of Christ as a spirit that the faith of the Church was built, but upon the manifestations of Christ's Spiritual Body, in which St. Paul found man's destiny to be revealed. Whatever we may think of St. Paul's argument, it is important that we should understand what he believed it to involve.

These considerations may be reinforced by other

¹ 'Christ sought to impress on His disciples two great lessons—that He had raised man's body from the grave, and that He had glorified it. Nor can we conceive any way in which these truths could have been conveyed but by appearances at one time predominantly spiritual, at another predominantly material, though both were alike real. For the same reason we may suppose that the Lord took up into His Glorified Body the material elements of that human body which was laid in the grave, though, as we shall see, true personality lies in the preservation of the individual formula or law which rules the organisation in each case, and not in the actual but ever-changing organisation which may exist at any moment' (Westcott, *Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 108).

expressions of St. Paul which, as being easier to interpret, can be more briefly treated. For example, when he urges as an encouragement to holiness that 'if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His spirit that dwelleth in you,'¹ what is implied is that we may expect to find in our own earthly lives instances, on a lower plane, of that absolute subjugation of matter to spirit which was exhibited in the revivification, in a glorified mode of being, of Christ's 'Natural Body.' Every victory of the spirit over the flesh is but a faint picture of the victory of His Resurrection, in which the Body was not abandoned, but transfigured and transformed.

Or, again, what would be the bearing of the clause *καὶ . . . ἐτάφη* in the middle of the statement 1 Cor. xv. 3-7, unless the burial of Christ's Body was a matter upon which emphasis needed to be laid? There is only one explanation of the clause. It was inserted in this stereotyped formula for the same reason which has gained it a place in every Christian creed. It brings out the fact that the Body which was on the Cross was the same Body which, glorified and spiritualised, was the object of the adoration of the chosen witnesses.

¹ Rom. viii. 11; cf. 1 Cor. vi. 14.

I have dwelt on the witness of St. Paul at considerable length. But his witness is so significant, and has been so unduly depreciated, that it has been worth while to show how emphatic it is in regard not only to the objectivity of the appearances of the Risen Christ, but also in regard to the Apostle's belief that the sacred Body 'saw no corruption' in the tomb. We have confined ourselves to the evidence of letters admitted on all sides to be from the hand of Paul, and we find that it is entirely in accord with the sentiments ascribed to him in the Acts. In his speech at Antioch in Pisidia he is represented (in Acts xiii. 34 f.) as arguing that Ps. xvi. 10 is a prophetic forecast of Christ's Resurrection, applying the text exactly as St. Peter is said to have applied it at Pentecost.¹ 'He saith also in another Psalm, Thou wilt not give thy Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption; but He whom God raised up saw no corruption.' In the Acts, just as in the Epistles, St. Paul is aware of the empty tomb. And there is no good reason for doubting that Ps. xvi. 10 was the passage in the minds of the early believers when they formulated the statement of 1 Cor. xv. 4,

¹ Acts ii. 31.

that Christ 'rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.' ¹

Before we leave St. Paul one point more must be observed. According to the tradition which he had received, Christ rose again 'the third day.' ² It does not seem that the first believers regarded this note of time as anticipated in any Old Testament text. The words of Hosea vi. 2: 'After two days will He revive us: on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him,' are striking, but there is no evidence that they were interpreted of the Resurrection in the Apostolic age. The tradition of 'the third day' is not evolved from the exegesis of the Old Testament. But it might be thought that it was due to a

¹ See also Acts xvii. 3, xxvi. 23. Ps. xvi. 10 is the only passage which the New Testament writers quote as prophetic of the Resurrection, and it is clear that its Christian interpretation was by no means obvious before the event. Indeed, there is no evidence that the victory of Messiah over death was part of the current Messianic teaching. The astonishment of the disciples at the empty tomb is explained in John xx. 9 by the reflection that 'as yet they knew not the scripture that He must rise from the dead.' For all that, the Lord is represented in Luke xxiv. 46 as teaching that His Resurrection had been foreshadowed: 'Thus it is written that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day.'

² In Jewish phraseology there is no distinction between the expressions 'on the third day' and 'after three days'; 1 Kings xii. 5, 12, and Esther iv. 16, v. 1 are Old Testament passages which are conclusive as to their identity of meaning, and in the New Testament we may compare Mark viii. 31 with the parallel Matt. xvi. 21.

recollection of predictions given by Christ Himself, such as those recorded by the Synoptists, and this alternative is sufficiently plausible to be worthy of a short examination ; its discussion, at any rate, will serve to introduce us to the evidence of the Gospels for the Resurrection.

The first prediction of the Passion and Resurrection followed St. Peter's acknowledgment that Jesus was the Messiah. 'He began to teach them that the Son of Man must . . . be killed, and after three days rise again.'¹ The teaching was unwelcome, and the Twelve did not understand it, although it was often repeated. They were forbidden to tell of the Transfiguration 'until the Son of Man should have risen again from the dead,'² yet they could not repress the inquiry among themselves as to 'what the rising from the dead should mean.' So, a little later, while still in Galilee, it was said, ' . . . When He is killed, after three days He shall rise again '³ ; but they 'were afraid' to ask the purport of the saying.⁴ Once more, as they go up to Jerusalem, the meaning of

¹ Mark viii. 31 = Matt. xvi. 21 = Luke ix. 22.

² Mark ix. 9 = Matt. xvii. 9.

³ Mark ix. 31, 32 = Matt. xvii. 22, 23 ; cf. Luke ix. 44, who omits here, however, any mention of the Resurrection promise.

⁴ In St. Matthew this is altered to 'they were exceedingly sorry,' but it is hardly doubtful that the Marcan version is the more original.

‘they shall kill Him; and after three days He shall rise again,’¹ is not caught. Even on the eve of the Passion the Eleven did not perceive what was coming, and so did not heed the words, ‘After I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee,’² and were puzzled by the saying, ‘A little while and ye behold Me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see Me.’³ The Fourth Gospel is quite consistent with the Synoptists as to this.

Again, both the Synoptists and the writer of the Fourth Gospel agree that some of these predictions were made in the hearing of a larger circle than that of the disciples. St. Mark notes significantly that the first of such forecasts was spoken ‘openly,’⁴ although Jesus forbade the disciples to tell that He was the Christ. In this case, however, there is no evidence that others besides the disciples were present. But St. John’s statement that after the cleansing of the Temple Christ said to the amazed Jews, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up,’⁵ is confirmed by St. Mark’s account of

¹ Mark x. 34 = Matt. xx. 19 = Luke xviii. 33, 34. St. Mark and St. Matthew record the curious misinterpretation of these words by James and John. They thought that the ‘rising again’ pointed to an assumption of Messianic sovereignty upon earth, and they asked that they might share in its highest rewards.

² Mark xiv. 28 = Matt. xxvi. 32. Not in Luke.

³ John xvi. 16.

⁴ Mark viii. 32. This is omitted by Matthew and Luke. Cf. also John x. 17, 18.

⁵ John ii. 19.

the charge before the Sanhedrin,¹ and his record that as Jesus hung on the Cross this enigmatical saying was cast in His teeth.² These passages show that it is not incredible (as has been often said) that the Pharisees should have asked a guard for the sepulchre, because ³ 'that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, After three days I rise again.'⁴

To sum up, then, this part of our inquiry. No sayings of Jesus are better authenticated than those in which He spoke, in public as well as in private, of His approaching death and the victory which was to follow ; but, at the same time, nothing is clearer in the Gospel history than the fact that these sayings were not believed or understood by those to whom they were addressed. They did not prepare the Apostles for the Crucifixion ; still less did they prepare them for the Resurrection. The belief that Christ appeared among them on 'the third day' was not stimulated by any conviction

¹ Mark xiv. 58 = Matt. xxvi. 61. Not in Luke.

² Mark xv. 29. ³ Matt. xxvii. 63 ; see p. 164, n. 3 below.

⁴ I do not cite the saying in Matt. xii. 40 ; the reason being that a study of the parallels irresistibly suggests the inference that it is an interpolation or comment of the Evangelist, and not a saying of the Lord. It does not harmonise with the argument of the context, which is given quite clearly in Luke xi. 29 ff., where the interpolation is absent. The only 'sign' that was given to the people of Nineveh was the preaching of Jonah. This was sufficient to bring them to repentance, and thus they 'condemned' the men of a later generation who did not repent, when 'a greater than Jonah' spoke to them (Luke xi. 32).

based on His words that they were then to look for His revival ; for, in fact, they had never interpreted His words of a Resurrection at any time from the tomb. This brings us back to the conclusion which we have already reached as to the inadequacy of the theory of subjective visions ; but what we are now concerned with is the tradition that it was on ' the third day ' that Christ rose. This St. Paul had ' received,' and there is no evidence in either Epistles or Gospels that it was originated by any cause other than the discovery of the empty sepulchre and the unlooked-for appearances of the Christ on the third day after His Passion.

A further inference of importance may be derived from what has been said. The form of the sentence *ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ . . καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ, εἶτα τοῖς δώδεκα* would suggest, *prima facie*, that the first appearances mentioned in this tradition took place on ' the third day,' and, if that were so, they must have been in Jerusalem, where Peter and the rest were at that time. But if this inference be not admitted as valid, and the Resurrection on the third day be certified as quite distinct from the visions of the Christ, *something* must have been observed on the third day which justified the assertion *ὅτι ἐγήγερται*. And this could have been nothing else but the discovery of the empty tomb. If the tradition which St. Paul

received is not to be interpreted as involving appearances in Jerusalem, it must be interpreted as bearing witness to the empty tomb. Thus the earliest extant tradition of the Resurrection demonstrates the inconsistency of the modern theories, that 'the first appearances happened in Galilee,'¹ and that the story of the empty tomb was an afterthought. These theories cannot be held simultaneously. In reaching this conclusion, be it observed, no appeal has been made to the Gospels; and it is remarkable, therefore, how completely it is in accordance with their witness, which we shall now proceed to examine in detail.

The Gospel narrative which most nearly agrees with the Pauline tradition is, as we might expect, that of St. Luke, who was St. Paul's disciple and friend. He says nothing about a vision of the Christ by the women, but he records their experiences at the sepulchre, which led them to report to the Eleven that He was risen.² His narrative is clearly based on traditions of the Christian Church in Jerusalem,³ as distinct from the Galilaean tradi-

¹ Schmiedel, *Encycl. Bibl.* iv. 4063.

² It is an important point that Matthew, Luke, and John all agree that the women reported the tomb to be empty before Jesus had been seen by any one.

³ It has been pointed out several times by Dr. Sanday that St. Luke seems to have had, throughout his Gospel, access to some special source of information at Jerusalem.

tion, which, as we shall see, was conspicuous in St. Mark, the disciple of St. Peter, and is followed in St. Matthew. The appearances of the Risen Christ which St. Luke records—to St. Peter, to the two travellers, to the Eleven in the upper room and at the Ascension—were all observed in Jerusalem. The tradition of that Church would naturally lay less stress upon appearances in Galilee, but that the Lucan narrative is *inconsistent* with the occurrence of such can only be maintained if Luke xxiv. be taken as an exhaustive report. It does not profess to be anything of the kind, and a careful examination of this chapter discloses signs of compression which are most instructive. It does not contain towards the end express indications of time as distinct from place, but all the incidents which are narrated cannot have occurred on the day of the Resurrection. The supper at Emmaus would not have been earlier than about 7 P.M.; the day was ‘far spent.’ Then we must allow time for the return of Cleopas and his companion to Jerusalem, for the rehearsal of their experiences, for the recognition of Christ by the Eleven, for His partaking of food in their midst, for His exposition of Messianic prophecy, for His commission to the Apostles to preach throughout the world, for the walk to Olivet preparatory to the Ascension. For such a series of incidents and discourses we require

a longer interval than five hours. And it will hardly be maintained that Luke xxiv. 51 represents the Ascension as taking place at midnight.¹

The fact is that Luke xxiv. 44-52 is much condensed, and incidents and sayings which belong to different occasions are combined, after a fashion not infrequent in the Gospels. Had we no other record of the appearances of the Risen Christ we should not be able to disentangle these various discourses, although we should be perplexed to find room for them all on the evening of Easter Day; but, bearing in mind the compressed character of Luke xxiv. 44 ff., we see that it is not inconsistent with the chronological data of Acts i. 1-12,² according to which the command to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit had been sent (Luke xxiv. 49 ;

¹ The words of the Epistle of Barnabas (xv. 9) ἄγομεν τὴν ἡμέραν τὴν ὀγδόην . . . ἐν ᾗ καὶ ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνέστη ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ φανερωθεὶς ἀνέβη εἰς οὐρανοὺς do not necessarily identify the day of the Resurrection with that of the Ascension; for while the writer seems to say that both the Resurrection and Ascension happened on a Sunday, he does not even suggest that they happened on the *same* Sunday (cf. Swete, *The Apostles' Creed*, p. 69).

² This later account, it may be observed, was intended by its author to be read in sequence to Luke xxiv. ; it purports to be a *continuation*, not a *corrected edition*, of the former narrative. *E.g.*, to understand Acts i. 12, which tells of the Apostles returning from Olivet after the Ascension, we must have before us Luke xxiv. 50, which tells that they were led out from the city 'over against Bethany.' There is no mention of the walk from Jerusalem *towards* Bethany in Acts i. 1-11.

Acts i. 4), and to preach thenceforth to all nations (Luke xxiv. 47 ; Acts i. 8), were given subsequently—probably just before the Ascension. We need find, therefore, no difficulty in reconciling St. Luke's Gospel narrative with the record in the Acts of 'forty' days between the Resurrection and Ascension. And in this period time can be found for the Galilaean appearances which are elsewhere recorded.

The witness of the Fourth Gospel is admitted by critics of every school to be independent of that given by St. Luke, and it is, therefore, all the more weighty when it corroborates the Lucan tradition. This it does remarkably, despite the obvious differences of detail. The order of events in John xx. (of which the earlier verses at least point back to the testimony of an eyewitness) is as follows : Mary Magdalene (with others, as appears from the plural οὐκ οἶδαμεν of xx. 2) visits the tomb, and sees the stone rolled away. She hastens to tell Peter and John, who go to see the empty tomb for themselves.¹ Then she sees two angels in the tomb,² and

¹ Cf. Luke xxiv. 24, ἀπῆλθάν τινες τῶν σὺν ἡμῖν, showing that Peter had a companion.

² St. Luke also has two 'men in shining apparel' (=angels ; cf. 2 Macc. iii. 26). The only discrepancy between this and the Johannine account is that in the one case the vision of angels is placed before the tidings of the empty tomb has been brought to the disciples, in the other case after it—just the kind of discrepancy that might be anticipated in independent reports.

this vision is followed by one of the Risen Lord, which she reports to the disciples. Christ appears to them later on, in the evening, Thomas being absent; and, again, a week later, Thomas being present. As in St. Luke's Gospel, special stress is laid upon the identification of the Lord by the *stigmata* of the Passion¹; and as in all the reports, the appearance of Christ to the Eleven is regarded as the palmary sign, the crowning proof of His victory. In an appendix (John xxi.) a further appearance in Galilee to seven disciples is recorded,² of which there is no other account; but by St. John, as by St. Luke, the stress is laid upon the appearances at Jerusalem.

In connexion with the Lucan and Johannine

¹ Luke xxiv. 40; John xx. 20. The passage cited by Ignatius from the Gospel according to the Hebrews (*Ad Smyrn.* iii. 2) is, as Schmiedel rightly urges, dependent on Luke: *καὶ ὅτε πρὸς τοὺς περὶ Πέτρον ἦλθεν, ἔφη αὐτοῖς· λάβετε, ψηλαφήσατέ με, καὶ ἴδετε ὅτι οὐκ εἰμὶ δαιμόνιον ἀσώματον. καὶ εὐθὺς αὐτοῦ ἤψαντο καὶ ἐπίστευσαν.* I have already argued that there is nothing in the 'touching' recorded in the Gospels which is specially difficult of credence if the objective reality of the appearance of Christ be conceded.

² Harnack holds that the Lost Conclusion of Mark lies behind this chapter, but I cannot think that the reasons given are sufficient. The affinity which he suggests between John xxi. and the Gospel of Peter is much more probable. The last words of the latter are: 'I Simon Peter and Andrew went to the sea, and with us were Levi, the son of Alphaeus, whom the Lord . . .' The scene is plainly the Sea of Galilee, and Andrew and Levi may well have been the two unnamed disciples of John xxi. 2.

narratives are to be placed the last twelve verses of St. Mark, not as part of the original Gospel, but as an appendix by an early hand. The appendix in question corroborates these narratives, upon which it seems to be based, but it does not add to them any new matter noteworthy for our present purpose. It tells of the appearances to Mary Magdalene, to the two travellers, and to the Eleven in the upper chamber, and it records the Ascension, following what we have called the Jerusalem tradition.

We now come to Mark xvi. 1-8 and Matt. xxviii., the former of which is but a fragment of the original Marcan narrative. That throughout his later chapters the author of the Greek 'Gospel according to St. Matthew' reproduces closely the account of St. Mark, with additions of his own, is known to every student of the Synoptic problem, and in following their narratives of the Resurrection it is important to bear this in mind. We have already seen that in both Gospels¹ it is recorded that the Lord had announced, 'After I am raised up *I will go before you into Galilee.*' We should expect, *prima facie*, that the Evangelists who record this prediction would also record its fulfilment. Further St. Mark (followed again by St. Matthew) begins his Resurrection narrative by telling that Mary

¹ Mark xiv. 28 = Matt. xxvi. 32. This is not given by St. Luke.

Magdalene (she is always named first) and the other women were greeted by the 'young man' whom they saw at the sepulchre with the words: 'Go, tell His disciples and Peter that *He is going before you into Galilee*; there ye shall see Him, as He told you.'¹ However, in the extant part of St. Mark the sequel is not told. The last sentence says that the women fled from the sepulchre and told no one, 'for they were afraid . . .' (ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ . . .).

Let us observe, first, that this sentence cannot now be completed with any confidence. ἐφοβοῦντο γάρ might have been followed by an accusative of the person feared,² in which case τοὺς στρατιώτας —i.e. the soldiers of the guard, of whom, however, St. Mark has said nothing — or τοὺς Ἰουδαίους³ might be the missing words; or it might have been followed by a verb 'afraid to . . .'⁴; or by μή with a subjunctive,⁵ 'afraid lest they might . . .';

¹ Mark xvi. 7 = Matt. xxviii. 7. It is instructive to notice how this was altered in the Jerusalem tradition, followed by St. Luke (xxiv. 6-7): 'Remember how He spake unto you *when He was yet in Galilee*, that the Son of Man must . . . rise again the third day.' This purports to be a reference to the first promise of the Resurrection in Luke ix. 22.

² As in Mark xi. 18, ἐφοβοῦντο γὰρ αὐτόν.

³ The Gospel of Peter represents Mary Magdalene as fearing lest the Jews should see her visiting the tomb.

⁴ As in Mark ix. 32, ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτὸν ἐπερωτῆσαι.

⁵ As in Acts xxvii. 29.

or the sentence may have ended with an adjective like *σφόδρα*,¹ 'they were exceeding afraid.' But, however it ended, we are not entitled to conclude that, according to St. Mark, the women's silence remained unbroken,² and that nothing further happened to them. All that can be inferred is that *up to the point which the story has reached* they had told no one of the empty tomb and of the message which they received there. But the next sentence may have narrated their resolution to tell the disciples of their experience, which, in the circumstances, would be the course they would naturally take.

This is confirmed by the narrative of St. Matthew. Matt. xxviii. 1-8 is undoubtedly based on Mark xvi. 1-8, the Matthaean editor *more suo* amplifying his original and treating it with freedom³; and thus

¹ As in Matt. xvii. 6; xxvii. 54.

² It is easy to illustrate the precariousness of such an inference. Suppose, *e.g.*, that instead of twelve verses a couple of chapters were missing from St. Mark, and that the extant portion ended with *οὐκ ἀπεκρίνατο οὐδέν* (Mark xiv. 61). Would it then be legitimate to infer that St. Mark knew nothing of any reply made by Jesus to the high priest? Obviously it would not, for the narrative proceeds to tell that the next question put by the priest *did* elicit an answer. And so in the present case.

³ *E.g.* the hesitancy of the women at first to tell of the empty tomb (Mark xvi. 8) is omitted, and their zeal in bringing the news to the disciples is emphasised (Matt. xxviii. 8). I have not laid any stress in the argument upon details for which St. Matthew is to be regarded as the sole authority. Here, as at

Matt. xxviii. 9, 10, may be taken as giving a clue to what followed the enigmatical ἐφοβούντο γάρ in the Marcan account. Now, these verses tell of an appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene and her companion as they are leaving the tomb, evidently another version of the appearance recorded in John xx. 14-17 to Mary Magdalene alone. It is not explicitly told that the intimation of the approaching meeting in Galilee reached the Eleven, but it is implied.¹ In vv. 16, 17 the meeting is described, the words ἰδόντες αὐτόν of v. 17 having reference to the promise ἐκεῖ αὐτὸν ὄψεσθε of v. 7.

other points in his Gospel (*e.g.* xxvii. 51, 52), incidents are mentioned for which we have no corroborative testimony, and which are hard to reconcile with the rest of the evidence. There are difficulties, *e.g.* in the story of the guard and the sealing of the sepulchre (xxvii. 62-66; xxviii. 11-15), which is peculiar to this Evangelist. The employment of legionaries to guard the tomb of a crucified provincial would be unlike Roman usage, although in this instance the fear of revolt in the name of the 'King of the Jews' may have inspired such an exceptional precaution (see also p. 129 *n.* above). It is still more difficult to understand why the soldiers reported their failure to keep watch to the *priests*, rather than to their superior officers (xxviii. 11), and to plead slumber as an excuse (xxviii. 13, 14) would have been out of the question for a Roman soldier. Further, the statement that the guards saw the angel who rolled away the stone is without corroboration, except in the Gospel of Peter, which tells of the vision of the Resurrection by the soldiers, and this last is apparently only an exaggerated reproduction of the Matthaean story. See p. 186 *infra*.

¹ Like the narrative of St. Luke, the narrative of St. Matthew is condensed and compressed into a small space.

Of this manifestation of the Risen Christ I have already said something when examining the Pauline tradition. It may or may not be identical with the appearance to the five hundred (as has been suggested above, p. 134); but it is clearly regarded by the Evangelist as of signal importance, being the fulfilment of a repeated promise of Christ Himself.

It is highly probable that the basis of the Matthaean narrative was the lost conclusion of St. Mark, which narrated, therefore, an appearance to Mary Magdalene (or to the women generally), as well as an appearance in Galilee at which the Eleven were present. That St. Mark means to represent the Eleven as at Jerusalem on Easter Day is clear from xvi. 7, and if he recorded any appearance to them on *that* day, it must have been at Jerusalem. But he meant to bring them to Galilee afterwards.¹ St. Mark (followed by St. Matthew) represents the Galilaean tradition, of which we have another trace in John xxi. and in the Gospel of Peter.

We find, then, that while the Gospels preserve two distinct traditions as to the appearances of the Risen Lord, these are not inconsistent with each other. The Jerusalem tradition, as adopted by St.

¹ It is possible that the particular mention of Peter (Mark xvi. 7) was intended to lead up to the narrative of the appearance to Peter known to St. Paul and St. Luke; but the inference is doubtful.

Luke, does not exclude the occurrence of appearances in Galilee, and the Galilaean tradition of St. Mark (followed by St. Matthew) began with an appearance of Christ to the women at the tomb. And although the Apostolic summary—perhaps formulated at an earlier date than either of these—which is preserved by St. Paul makes no mention of place, it suggests Galilee for the scene of the appearance to the five hundred hardly less clearly than it suggests Jerusalem for the appearances to Peter and the Eleven. No doubt a harmonistic table cannot be constructed on the principle that every syllable of every report must be infallibly accurate, and to assume a principle of this kind would be to introduce the gravest difficulties. But such a principle is no part of the Christian faith, and it is unnecessary to contemplate its logical consequences. The evidence for the Resurrection of Christ can survive the test of a close scrutiny, even though no postulate of minute inerrancy be made on behalf of the witnesses ; and when so examined with an open mind, and without the prejudice that ‘miracles’ are impossible, it is found to be of a high degree of credibility. The variations in detail are not more or greater than might be anticipated from independent reports, while the minute correspondences which reveal themselves to a careful examination are very remarkable. The Pauline tradition is the

ultimate foundation of the Church's belief in Christ's Resurrection, and its force is not lessened because later narratives tell the wonderful story from different points of view.

There is a sense in which, as Ritschl and his school are forward to remind us, belief in the historical fact of the Resurrection must be distinguished from the belief in Jesus the living Lord. The latter belief is, indeed, the essential matter for the necessities of the Christian life, and I should be ready to admit that no past fact of history can be certified by such guarantees as the intuitions of the devout spirit provide for the present fact that 'Jesus lives.' It is very significant that the manifestations of the Risen Christ were made to believers alone, to those who had the faculties to discern the spiritual possibilities of a new life in Him ; and it is still true that the evidences for the historical fact of Christ's Resurrection are incompetent of themselves to generate faith in the power and the grace of His Risen Life. It is still true that 'He is made manifest not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen of God.'¹ But, for all that, the certitude of the Christian believer can justify itself by an appeal to history, and when challenged it must be ready to make the appeal. The belief that Jesus *lives* must necessarily be a

¹ Acts x. 41.

more intimate possession of the soul than the belief that Jesus *rose* ; the one is a *religious*, the other but an *historical*, belief. Yet, were the latter discredited at the bar of critical science, it may be doubted whether the former would continue for long to dominate the lives of men, and it is, therefore, imperative that we should understand the nature of the evidence which has emboldened the Church ever since the Apostolic age to declare her confession of belief that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

CHAPTER VII

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST

THE article of the Creed which sets forth the belief of the Church that Jesus Christ was born of a Virgin Mother has been the subject during recent years of a controversy which has caused uneasiness to many good Christian people who do not as a rule trouble themselves with theological disputations. For the mere fact that the truth of the article is being questioned not only by those who are incredulous of the claims of Christ, but by some who call Him Master and Lord, and desire with unaffected sincerity to retain their place and privilege as members of His Church, and partakers of His redemption, is felt to be significant. The question has, indeed, been raised many times in Christian history by individual thinkers, but their speculations have generally been regarded as eccentricities of criticism, which might safely be passed by, when they were not obviously the outcome of a disbelief in the Incarnation. But it has now become apparent that the Church must re-examine the foundations of this article of the Creed, for it is being urged by some who are entitled to be heard that

the progress of knowledge demands a revision of her formularies, or, if that cannot be attained, that a greater freedom in their interpretation should be conceded to her members than has heretofore been permitted. We have, therefore, to inquire whether the advance of science and the light which criticism has shed upon the sacred text of the Gospels have, to any appreciable extent, diminished the confidence with which a Christian man may say, 'I believe in Jesus Christ . . . Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.'

The first observation which must be made is an obvious one, but needful of remembrance at this time as much as at any other period in the Church's history. The article in question is a statement of a fact, and not of a theory about facts. It is a statement of *fact*. There is no ambiguity about the terms in which it is expressed, nor is there any controversy as to what it means. It means that our Lord Jesus Christ had no earthly father, and that His conception in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary was brought about by divine agency, without being preceded by the normal antecedents of conception.¹ No one has ever supposed that it means anything else but this. Every branch of the

¹ Cf. Luke i. 35: 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also the holy thing which is to be born shall be called the Son of God.'

Church has understood it to mean exactly this. And thus the article of the Creed under consideration must be either true or false as a statement of historical fact. There is no way out of the dilemma, nor has any ever been proposed. If it be false, then all Christendom has been mistaken in this matter, since the beginning of the second century, at any rate. I do not desire to rest the case on authority, but it is well to call attention at the outset of our inquiry to the magnitude of the issue involved. Whether it can be *proved* true or false is another question, for, like any other allegation of fact, the verdict 'not proven' might conceivably be the only safe verdict to bring in. But the statement in itself must be either true or untrue.

Secondly, a fact is here alleged to have taken place which is abnormal in our experience, outside the ordinary course of nature, and therefore essentially miraculous, a signal instance of the divine operation. And if the position be assumed that 'miracles are impossible,' or that 'miracles do not happen' under any circumstances, then *cadit quaestio*. No one who rejects the miraculous can accept this article of the Creed. But if credence be refused to it on such grounds as these, then the Christianity of the Apostolic age was rooted and grounded in a lie, and we must be prepared to abandon not only our belief in the Virgin Birth of

Christ, but also our belief in His Resurrection from the dead and Ascension into heaven. It is quite true that in our present ignorance of the inmost workings of nature we are not entitled to assert with confidence that these extraordinary and unprecedented occurrences may not all be brought in the future under the protection of 'natural' laws.¹ That is a possibility which our children's children may find to be illustrated in countless ways of which we can conjecture nothing. But, our knowledge being what it is, there is a wide and clear distinction between those events whose antecedents we can understand, which we call 'natural,' and those which are insusceptible of merely physical explanation. And Christianity is deeply pledged to the acceptance of both these classes of events. The Crucifixion is a 'natural' event; the Resurrection is 'supernatural,' as we say, for want of a better word, although we do not mean thereby to allege

¹ Thus it has been suggested, in recent years, that the birth of Christ from a Virgin is not without natural analogies. Physiological observation and experiment seem to show not only that parthenogenesis is the normal method of reproduction in certain species, but that it can be artificially brought about by an appropriate stimulus or special excitation in the case of other species (see some references in C. Harris, *Pro Fide* (1914), p. xl). But upon such analogies it would be unwise to lay stress, nor are they really complete. It is of the essence of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth of Christ that it was an *unique* event, even as He who was thus born was *unique*.

that the hand of God may not be as truly discerned in events of the natural order; and we cannot abandon our belief in the Virgin Birth of Christ merely because it is outside the ordinary course of nature, unless we are prepared to abandon for a like reason the Resurrection of Christ, the preventing grace of God, and the efficacy of prayer.

These obvious considerations are often overlooked in hasty discussions of the subject before us, and it was therefore worth while to rehearse them. But we must now proceed to the consideration of the main reasons, apart from any general abandonment of the miraculous, which seem to account just now for the reluctance on the part of some sincerely Christian people to recite their confession of belief in the Virgin Birth. The first and the most common stumbling-block is to be found in the supposed insufficiency of the evidence for so momentous and extraordinary an event. It is clear that a man is entitled to expect good evidence before he pledges himself to belief in anything of the sort. The Virgin Birth is, no doubt, related in the New Testament, and there were days when any 'text' of Holy Scripture on this or any other subject would have been regarded as the 'end of controversy.' But we cannot conceal from ourselves that those days are over, and that men no longer claim for every statement of the Bible

inerrancy as to details of fact. We prize its spiritual message as much as our fathers did—even more highly, it may be, than they did, because we have learnt better the conditions under which the message was recorded and has been preserved for us. But we have learnt, too, that inspiration does not necessarily involve an infallible and scientific precision of statement. And the question is asked, What if the infancy narratives of the first and third Gospels are untrustworthy as to the antecedents of the birth of Jesus Christ? The question may honestly be put by a believer in the Christian revelation, and it is well to say so at once, to avoid misapprehension, before we begin to sift and co-ordinate the evidence of the New Testament writers and of those of the succeeding age as to the matter of fact with which we are immediately concerned.

What, then, is the *a posteriori* testimony to which we may appeal? It consists (A) of the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Luke; (B) of some phrases in St. Paul, St. John, St. Ignatius, and one or two other early writers; and something must be said as to each of these.

(A) The narratives in St. Matt. i. and St. Luke i., ii. cannot receive full treatment here. But for clearness the leading points must be rehearsed.

Of the two Gospel accounts of the Nativity,

neither belongs to what is called the Synoptic tradition. This embodies the substance of the story of the Christ as originally preached by those who from the outset were 'eyewitnesses and ministers of the word.' It gives the personal testimony of the Apostles, and begins, therefore, with the baptism of the Lord, when His public ministry was inaugurated. This was the beginning of the good news, and St. Mark's Gospel, which gives the Synoptic tradition in its earliest form, so represents it. From the day on which the eleven Apostles met to consider their course after the Ascension, Christianity claimed to rest on the testimony of eyewitnesses, of those who had seen the things which they proclaimed as the Gospel. And thus in the earliest appeals which were made by Christian teachers there was no room for any insistence on the manner of Christ's birth. Whether the Apostles had heard of its wonderful character or no at so early a date, they could not speak of it from personal knowledge, and in any case, therefore, it would find no place in the earliest Christian sermons, or in that early record of the Ministry, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ which we have in the Second Gospel, and which lies behind the First and Third Gospels. The Nativity narratives are independent of the Synoptic tradition, and it is quite natural that they should be so.

We begin with St. Luke's account. His Gospel may be dated as having been written, at any rate, before 80 A.D.; and there is no reason for supposing that its introductory chapters were written at any later time. The whole book exhibits many traces of unity of authorship. Now, the problem as to the sources from which the author derived his information for chaps. i., ii. will probably never be completely solved; but it cannot be doubted that these sources were Jewish. The curiously minute account of the ritual at the presentation in the Temple, for instance, is worthy of note:

‘When the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord), and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.’¹

Dr. Sanday has observed that this ‘is very unlike St. Luke, the disciple of St. Paul, the great opponent of everything legal, and very unlike the date 75-80 A.D., when the Christian Church had long given up these Jewish usages.’² And the spirit of Jewish particularism which appears in these chapters, and notably in the Canticles, when

¹ Luke ii. 22, 24.

² *Critical Questions*, p. 135.

considered side by side with the nature of their Christology, has led many scholars to infer that St. Luke is working here on an Aramaic document which, *more suo*, he has rehandled and impressed with the characteristics of his own inimitable style.

‘He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.’¹

‘He hath holpen Israel his Servant that he might remember mercy (as he spake unto our fathers) toward Abraham and his seed for ever.’²

The Judaic spirit of these passages is unmistakable. So too Anna the prophetess spake of the Child ‘to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.’³ The Benedictus tells of the redemption of the Chosen People and the horn of salvation which has been raised up in the house of David. The Messianic deliverance will take the form of salvation from Israel’s political and hereditary foes. And although Simeon the aged has a glimpse of the enlightenment of the Gentiles (such as appears in some passages in the later Isaiah), yet the consummation of his joy is the thought of the glory of God’s people, Israel. Dr. Harnack, indeed, and others,

¹ Luke i. 32, 33.

² Luke i. 54, 55.

³ Luke ii. 38.

regard the Canticles as due to the creative genius of St. Luke himself, who caught with marvellous fidelity the temper and tone of the period of which he wrote; but I cannot think this a satisfactory explanation. Whatever may be said as to the narrative portions of Luke i., ii., it is hard to doubt that the Benedictus, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis are Greek translations of native psalms or hymns, distinguished mainly from the still earlier Psalms of Solomon, by the spiritual insight which they reveal, and the dignity and simplicity of the ideals to which they point forward.¹

Some writers would go further than this, and see traces of an Aramaic document underlying the whole of St. Luke's first two chapters. I confess that I do not think the evidence is sufficient to warrant this inference. They are, indeed, steeped in Old Testament phraseology. At point after point language is used which recalls the phraseology of the Jewish Scriptures. But St. Luke was familiar with the Septuagint version, and it is a quite tenable view that he deliberately composed this part of his narrative in words which should recall

¹ See Ryle and James, *Psalms of Solomon*, p. lx. 'The writings which, in our opinion, most nearly approach our Psalms in style and character are the hymns preserved in the early chapters of St. Luke's Gospel, which in point of date of composition probably stand nearer to the Psalms of Solomon than any other portion of the New Testament.' Cf. also p. xci.

the familiar tales of Hebrew history.¹ He was, undoubtedly, a writer of artistic genius; and no part of his Gospel, not even the parable of the Prodigal Son, is written with greater felicity of diction than the story of the Nativity. Did we not claim for him a higher title to respect, we should say that he nowhere betrays a more perfect and exquisite taste than here, choosing, as he does, to use words already full of sacred associations when he set himself to tell of the birth of the Christ.

The late Dr. Briggs, of New York, published some years ago an interesting, though not entirely convincing, theory as to the 'sources' of St. Luke's opening chapters.² He found no less than seven pieces of poetry embedded in the narrative—viz., the Benedictus, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis, the Song of the Angels, the Annunciation to Mary (in four fragments, i. 28, 30-33, 35-37, 38), the Song of Elizabeth (i. 42-45), and the Annunciation to Zacharias (i. 13-17). These he held to be manifestly

¹ This is the view of Dr. Armitage Robinson: 'I see no reason for thinking that he used any pre-existing document at this point; he was probably putting the story into writing for the first time, as the result of his own inquiries; and his style is modelled on the old Hebrew stories, which he was familiar with through the Greek translation of the Old Testament' (*Some Thoughts on the Incarnation*, p. 39).

² *New Light on the Life of Jesus*, p. 162 sqq.

translations of Hebrew poetry, and he believed himself able to determine the metre in which they were originally composed, six of them being in trimeters and one in pentameters. Dr. Briggs suggested further that we have a kindred pentameter fragment in Matt. i. 20, 21 (the Annunciation to Joseph). And his conclusion was that we have here the *disjecta membra* of two longer poems of the infancy, written in Hebrew, one of which was chiefly used by St. Matthew, and the other by St. Luke. These poems, he urged, were current among the relatives of Jesus after His Resurrection, and would have been historical sources of the highest value, St. Luke's story of the infancy being 'nothing more than a prose setting for the seven poetic pieces given by him.' One is somewhat sceptical as to the precision with which the original metres can be determined, nor is it clear that Luke i. 13-17, or Matt. i. 20, 21, are poetry rather than prose, or that Dr. Briggs has shown cause sufficient for holding that the passages which he culled from the story of the Annunciation are merely extracts from a poem. But it may be allowed, nevertheless, that his general view of St. Luke i., ii., contains an element of truth, and that if St. Luke used documentary sources at all in these early chapters, they were most probably poems like the Canticles.

The narrative is, indeed, much more than a

‘prose setting’ for such poetical pieces, inasmuch as they occupy but a small portion after all of chapters i., ii. Nor must it be forgotten that if St. Luke incorporated quotations of the kind into his narrative, he gave them the *imprimatur* of his own authority. He had just declared (i. 3, 4) that his purpose in writing was to trace ‘the course of all things *accurately* from the first,’ that Theophilus might ‘know the *certainty* concerning the things wherein he had been instructed.’ And it has been abundantly proved many times that, wherever his historical statements can be tested, he justifies this claim to be a trustworthy historian. It would be a strange way indeed of conveying accurate and certain information if St. Luke, the careful writer, who was a physician as well as an historian, should proceed in his very first chapter to set down a mythical account of the Saviour’s birth, for which his *only* authority was the phraseology of a current hymn. And it is quite certain, so far as any literary inference is certain, that St. Luke did not suppose himself to be reproducing a ‘myth,’ and that he composed his narrative with a full conviction that Christ was miraculously born.

But whatever we think of the theory that poems of the Nativity were in circulation among Christian believers when St. Luke wrote, it is clear that the story of the wonderful birth must ultimately be due

to the Blessed Virgin herself, if it be true ; and that St. Luke sets it down as true would naturally suggest that he believed her to have told it, if not to him, yet to others whose witness had reached him. And it is full of interest to observe that the narrative, as we have it, suggests in its phraseology that it came ultimately from a woman. Dr. Sanday has called attention to ‘ the remarkable mode of dating events ’¹ in such passages as i. 24, 26, 56, where stress is laid, in a way that would be more natural to a woman than to a man, on the intervals of time between the conception of Elizabeth, the Annunciation, and the birth of John the Baptist. Or, again, in i. 44 the incident recorded is one which would most naturally be dwelt upon and remembered by a woman. ‘ She was greatly troubled at the saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this might be ’ (i. 29). It is from the point of view of the Maiden Mother’s experience that the story is told throughout. And, more generally, the loving tenderness of the details—‘ she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes ’ ; she ‘ kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart ’ ; ‘ the child [*i.e.* John the Baptist] grew and waxed strong in spirit ’—points, we think, to the same conclusion. As Professor Ramsay put it, ‘ there is a womanly spirit in the whole narrative

¹ *Critical Questions*, p. 127.

which seems inconsistent with the transmission from man to man.' ¹

Dr. Sanday has more than once put forward an hypothesis to account for the way in which the Virgin's narrative came to St. Luke's knowledge. He observes that St. Luke had evidently access to some special source of information about the Court of the Herods, and he notes that 'Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward,' is mentioned by him twice (viii. 3, xxiv. 10). She was one of the women who ministered to Christ in Galilee; she was one of those who went to the tomb on the Resurrection morning, and she probably had witnessed the Crucifixion (xxiii. 49). Perhaps, too, she was one of the women in the upper room after the Ascension (Acts i. 14). 'On these last two occasions we also know that the Mother of Jesus was in the company, and we cannot doubt at all that at this period the two women were much thrown together.' ² And so Dr. Sanday suggests that we have in the person of Joanna the link between the Virgin Mother and St. Luke which will help us to explain the character of his first two chapters. The hypothesis is an interesting one, and is, no doubt, quite possible. But we are not concerned to lay much stress upon it, for St. Luke's information

¹ *Was Christ born at Bethlehem?* p. 88.

² *Critical Questions*, p. 139; cf. *Book by Book*, p. 399.

about the Court of the Herods might have come to him in other ways ; for example, through Manaen, Herod's foster-brother, who was a Christian teacher at Antioch (Acts xiii. 1) and associated with St. Paul. We have no direct evidence that St. Luke knew Joanna personally. But as Dr. Sanday's hypothesis calls attention to a *possible* way in which the narrative of the Virgin might have passed to St. Luke, it is worthy of consideration, although few are likely to build exclusively upon it.

We may say, then, summarily, about St. Luke's account of the Nativity, that it is delivered as a record of fact by a careful and reverent writer, and that the internal evidence of its contents goes far to show that, whatever may be its literary 'sources,' it is derived in the ultimate resort from her who best knew its truth.

We now turn to the opening chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and here we find the story of the Nativity told from a quite different point of view. In St. Matthew the anxiety of Joseph, as in St. Luke the faith of Mary, is the most conspicuous feature ; and the most natural inference is that the report of the first Evangelist is in part based on details supplied by the man to whom the Virgin was betrothed. We cannot speak about this account, perhaps, with the same confidence with which we

may speak of St. Luke's. For (1) We do not know the date at which St. Matthew's Gospel assumed its present shape. It is quite possibly the latest of the four Gospels, and may not be earlier than 90 A.D. (2) We have no other work from the hand of the author, by reference to which we might test his accuracy in his record of events. (3) It may frankly be admitted that *some* details of the Matthaean Gospel,¹ such as the resurrection of the saints after the Crucifixion (xxvii. 52), the commission to St. Peter, 'Upon this Rock I will build my Church' (xvi. 18), the charge to preach to all the world and to baptize in the threefold Name (xxviii. 19), belong to a stratum of evangelical tradition of whose sources we know nothing, and which receives no direct corroboration from the other Gospels. (4) The habit of this Evangelist, of reporting the narrative of the Christ with the words of the Old Testament prophets in his mind, may have led here and there to reconstructions and accommodations of details.² And thus, as we said, it is difficult to use his narrative with the same degree of confidence which we repose in St. Luke, although it would be going much too far to treat it as untrustworthy in the main. But even allow-

¹ See p. 165 n.

² Compare, e.g., Matt. xxi. 5, xxvi. 15, xxvii. 34, with the parallels in the other Gospels.

ing for this, two or three things stand out in regard to his story of the Nativity which are noteworthy.

(a) It is certain that the writer believed that the birth of Christ was miraculous. Twenty years ago, indeed, it was suggested on the ground of certain diversities of reading in the Sinai Syriac, that the original text of the Gospel represented Joseph as the father of Jesus. It is quite true that in this Syriac version phrases occur which would seem to point that way: *e.g.* i. 16, 'Jacob begat Joseph: Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin, begat Jesus'; i. 21, 'She shall bear *to thee* a son'; i. 25, 'He took his wife, and she bare to him a son, and he called his name Jesus.' And eccentric readings similar to the first of these are found elsewhere, notably in the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila*.¹ But, despite these readings, the scribes have left undisturbed other verses (vv. 18-24) which are quite explicit on the point in question; and it is safe to say that no version of St. Matthew's Gospel is extant in any language which does not tell of the birth of Christ from a virgin. There is no good reason for supposing that the peculiarities of the Sinai Syriac here represent the original text of

¹ For the evidence see Rackham in Gore's *Dissertations*, Appended Note B; and Sanday, *s.v.* 'Jesus Christ,' in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, ii. 644; cf. Allen's *Commentary on St. Matthew* (*in loc.*).

the Gospel ; and even these do not extend to any assertion of Joseph's parentage, other than is found in a phrase inserted in the genealogy, with what motive we cannot now be sure.

(b) The Matthæan account is entirely independent of that by St. Luke, and it thus supplies us, *valeat quantum*, with an additional witness for the principal fact which it records. Now, two convergent traditions, coming from distinct sources, mutually corroborate and sustain each other as to the main facts which they describe. There is no trace in either Gospel that the infancy narrative of the other was known to the writer ; the details are quite different in the two cases, although there is no essential incompatibility. And some of the details in St. Matthew are those which Joseph might be expected to supply.

(c) In the third place, however prone the first Evangelist may be to find prophetic fulfilments in historical events, in no case can it be proved that he has invented the event in the interest of the prophecy.¹ The prophecy which he quotes as foretelling the Virgin Birth of the Redeemer is, as every one knows, Isaiah vii. 14 : ‘ Behold, a virgin (עַלְמָה) shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his

¹ This is well brought out by Bishop Gore, *Dissertations*, p. 33 *sqq.* ; cf. also Knowling, *Our Lord's Virgin Birth*, etc., p. 40. See p. 251 *infra*.

name Emmanuel.' But 'it does not appear that the Hebrew word need necessarily mean more than "young woman"; nor does it appear that there was any Jewish expectation that the Christ should be born of a virgin.'¹ This may be said even more decidedly. 'No trace,' writes Dr. Dalman (and there is no better authority on a point of the kind), 'is to be found among the Jews of any Messianic application of Isaiah's words concerning the Virgin's Son from which by any possibility—as some have maintained—the whole account of the miraculous birth of Jesus could have derived its origin.'² Whatever we may think of St. Matthew's application of Isaiah's words, it is quite certain that the story of the Virgin birth did not grow out of the prophecy. St. Matthew's commentary presupposes a tradition already well established.

With this view of the relation of the narrative to the prophecy most critics would agree. Jewish soil would have been very unfavourable to the genesis of a 'myth' like that of the Virgin Birth. Philo speaks, indeed, in certain passages (*e.g. De Cherub. 13*) of the holy women of the olden days,

¹ Gore, *Dissertations*, pp. 35, 289.

² Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (Eng. tr.), p. 276. Dr. Knowling (*loc. cit.* p. 37) quotes an apposite sentence from Neander: 'Such a fable as to the birth of the Messiah from a virgin could have arisen anywhere else easier than among the Jews.'

Sarah, Leah, Rebecca, Zipporah, as bearing children who had no mortal father; but this is, as Philo is careful to explain, a mystical account of the fruitfulness of the virtues as due to God alone. It is quite beside the point to quote such passages as if they had any bearing on the Nativity stories of the Gospels.

But it has been suggested that as the 'myth' did not originate in Jewish circles, it must have been of Gentile or pagan origin. And a mass of 'parallels' to the Nativity narratives of the Gospels have been collected with the view of establishing the affinity of the latter to pagan and Gentile thought. But the early date at which the Nativity stories of the Gospels appear, long before Christianity and paganism came into intimate association, the aversion and horror with which the earliest Christian believers regarded paganism and all its doctrines, the intensely Jewish atmosphere of the narratives of St. Matthew and St. Luke—such considerations prevent us from contemplating these parallels and analogies with any feeling other than that of curiosity.¹ The extravagance of these speculations is an indication of the difficulty which learned men and acute critics experience when they try to explain the story of the Virgin Birth on any hypothesis other than that of its ultimate truth.

¹ Cf. M'Neile, *Gospel according to St. Matthew*, p. 11.

Thus the narrative in St. Matthew i., like the narrative in St. Luke, is intended to describe what the writer believed to be a fact of history ; it cannot be regarded as developed out of prophecy, and there is no reason for tracing it to pagan beliefs as to the union of gods and men. It seems to be ultimately due, in some form and in some part, at least, to Joseph.

Farther than this we cannot go.

(B) Upon the direct testimony of the rest of the New Testament I shall not delay long. St. Paul *may* have meant to convey his belief in the Lord's Virgin Birth when he spoke of Christ as ' born of the seed of David according to the flesh ' (Rom. i. 3), and as ' born of a woman, born under the law ' (Gal. iv. 4). But these passages have been appealed to on both sides of the controversy, and they are, in any case, not decisive. St. John *may* imply in the narrative of the miracle at Cana that the Lord's mother was fully conscious of the miraculous personality of her Son (John ii. 3-5); but the exegesis is not certain. I shall return presently to the implications of St. Paul's teaching, but for the moment we are only concerned with direct statements. And so we may consider next the remarkably explicit language of St. Ignatius : ' Hidden from the prince of this world were the virginity of Mary and her child-bearing, and like-

wise the death of the Lord—three mysteries to be cried aloud, which were wrought in the silence of God.’¹ In this passage the virginity of Mary is as certain a point of doctrine to the writer as is the Crucifixion. Again, in his letter to the Smyrnaeans, Ignatius says that he is ‘firmly persuaded as touching our Lord that He is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, but Son of God by [the Divine] will and power, truly born of a virgin . . . truly nailed up for our sakes in the flesh.’² It is unnecessary to give quotations from the later Fathers. Those from Ignatius are of special importance because of their early date, and because of the Churches addressed. The Christianity of

¹ καὶ ἔλαθεν τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἡ παρθενία Μαρίας καὶ ὁ τοκετὸς αὐτῆς, ὁμοίως καὶ ὁ θάνατος τοῦ κυρίου· τρία μυστήρια κραυγῆς ἅτινα ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ θεοῦ ἐπράχθη (Eph. 19). In the notes to his *Ascension of Isaiah*, Dr. Charles points out that the words in xi. 16, ‘This [*i.e.* the virginity of Mary] hath escaped all the heavens, and all the princes, and all the gods of this world,’ are probably the source of the above-quoted passage of Ignatius. If he is right in this—and his argument seems sound—we shall have outside the canon an earlier witness than Ignatius to the doctrine of the Virgin Birth. In any case, it is important to notice that the way in which Ignatius speaks of it shows that it was a received opinion in his time (A.D. 110). This passage is extant not only in the Greek but also in the shorter Syriac recension of the Ignatian letters.

² *Smyrn.* 1, ἀληθῶς ὄντα ἐκ γένους Δαυεὶδ κατὰ σάρκα, υἱὸν θεοῦ κατὰ θέλημα καὶ δύναμιν, γεγεννημένον ἀληθῶς ἐκ παρθένου. It will be observed that Ignatius treats as parallel and co ordinate phrases ‘being of the race of David according to the flesh’ and ‘born of a virgin.’

Ephesus owed much both to St. Paul and to St. John, and it is incredible that the Virgin Birth should have been a received dogma in that city so early as the year 110 if it had not been congruous with the well-remembered teaching of these great Apostles.

Such is the direct evidence to the fact of the Virgin Birth which lies behind the Creed. Is it sufficient to determine belief? That is the question with which the Church is confronted, and to which such discordant answers are being given. Before we attempt to answer it, let us put a wider question. What amount of evidence would be regarded in our own day as sufficient to substantiate a statement of the sort? We have seen that ultimately the narratives go back to the two persons most immediately concerned—the only two persons, indeed, who could assert of their own knowledge that the Lord was born of a virgin Mother; and we have seen that this was a received opinion in the Church in the opening years of the second century. Yet—I have heard it urged—if in our own day the holiest and best of women were to assert that her first-born son came into the world while she was yet a maiden, her words, even though corroborated by the emphatic and positive testimony of him who called her wife, would not be believed. She might not be harshly judged; her

story might be received with respectful attention, but it would not be credited. And, therefore, it is asked, What becomes of your appeal to the infancy narratives of St. Matthew and St. Luke, accepted though they were by the untutored and devout minds of the first century, and what profit is there in pointing out that they are ultimately derived in all probability from St. Joseph and St. Mary respectively ? ¹

The answer, when the question is thus stated, goes to the root of the matter. The measure of our credence to testimony of this kind must necessarily depend on the estimate we have formed of the Child alleged to be miraculously born. No instructed Christian claims that such testimony as that of the infancy narratives would be sufficient to compel belief if there were nothing exceptional in the character and the history of the wondrous Child. But we read these narratives in the light of the Personality of Jesus Christ, as indicated and

¹ Theological controversy repeats itself, and the reader will remember that this is almost a reproduction of Hume's argument against the evidence for our Lord's Resurrection. He propounded the thesis that it would always remain more likely that the miracle should be false than that the testimony, whatever its amount, should be true. And although Paley is not in favour just now, his reply is exactly to the point. The evidence must be read in the light of what we know independently about the character of God and the Person of Christ. I venture to refer to Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. 'Miracle,' iii. 386.

revealed in His words, His deeds, His Resurrection from the dead ; and we then perceive that they assume a significance which would not otherwise appear. This is not to say that our acceptance of the Virgin Birth of Christ is governed entirely by our *a priori* conviction of its congruity with what we know of Him, but that the evidence for it—good and cogent so far as it goes—receives powerful and necessary reinforcement from all that we have received from the Bible and the Church as to His Incarnation and Resurrection, which mark Him off as unique in the history of mankind.

(1) And, first, as to His Resurrection. I am taking for granted here that He really rose from the dead, and that He was thus ‘declared to be the Son of God with power.’ One must begin somewhere in an argument of this kind, and in a former chapter some reasons have been given which justify us in regarding the Resurrection as a certain fact of history, and not only as a beautiful and inspiring idea. That ‘Jesus *lives*’ is, indeed, from one point of view the central presupposition of Christian faith ; but that ‘Jesus *rose*’ is the fact which enabled men to believe it. And what a fact it is, viewed only (as we say) from the physical side ! The forces of bodily dissolution were arrested in their course, and proved to be

subject to a higher law, to the unique and over-mastering Personality of Him who had died ! Is it natural to think that the Body which could thus respond to the Divine Will was begotten of mortal seed ? ‘ It was not *possible*,’ said St. Peter, ‘ that He should be holden of death.’¹ And if not possible, is it unreasonable for us to be ready to accept the explanation, offered by the only two persons who could offer it, that the human body of Jesus carried from the moment of conception in the womb the seed of immortality ?² The Resurrection of Christ may not *prove*, as we understand proof, His birth from a virgin ; but the Resurrection and the Virgin Birth are, I venture to suggest, easier to believe when taken conjointly than when either is separated from the other. There is a propriety of correspondence between the manner of His entrance into this earthly life and the fact of His superiority to death, which appeals to our sense of congruity.

(2) And, again, it is a fundamental principle of the Christian faith that Christ was morally *sinless*. Whatever else may be discarded, this remains essential to the Creed. It is quite true that the

¹ Acts ii. 24.

² Cf. Augustine : ‘ . . . cum dicitur Verbum Dei, per quod omnia facta sunt, sic assumpsisse corpus ex virgine . . . ut immortalitatem suam non corruerit, ut aeternitatem non mutaverit’ (Ep. cxxxvii. *Ad Volusianum*, § 6).

words of Scripture ¹ do not suggest any connexion between the sinlessness of Christ and His miraculous birth. And it is, of course, not *de fide* to assert the connexion. Yet there is nothing in Scripture to the contrary ; and it is worthy of consideration whether the connexion be not intimate and real. Certainly, the more deeply the teachings of biological science are studied, the more difficult is it to believe that any being, born of human parents under the ordinary conditions of natural generation, could be free from the *damnosa hereditas* of the weaknesses and faults of his ancestry. Not the theologian only, but the physician also, will tell us that a sinless man would be a physical miracle, no less than a moral miracle, and that the two cannot be dissociated, so close and intimate in human experience is the connexion between mind and body. This is not to suggest that there is anything essentially sinful in the normal antecedents of human birth, in the natural processes of generation by which the race is continued. That is a Manichæan idea, and one which needs to be repudiated by the Church as much now as at any other period in history. Nor need we enter here into the intricacies of the doctrine of original sin, true and important as that doctrine is ; nor need we stay to examine the sources of the story of the

¹ With the possible exception of Luke i. 35.

Fall. What is urged here is the simple principle that 'of natural generation we have positive knowledge, based on universal experience, that it does, as a fact, issue in a sinful person.'¹ If a sinless man was ever born, experience and science would alike suggest to us that there must have been something entirely exceptional in the circumstances of His conception in the womb. And the allegation that Christ was born of a virgin Mother supplies us with the exceptional antecedent of His sinless life of which we are in search.

To this line of reasoning the reply is sometimes offered that, after all, the taint of ancestry is conveyed through the mother to her child no less than through the father, and that if we are to press the argument to its logical conclusion, we are led to the Roman doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Blessed Mary; and not only thus far, for to secure an untainted offspring we must 'go back along the line of ancestry until we arrive at Eve herself, and postulate an uninterrupted chain of miracles appointed to preserve from spot of sin that progeny which, extending over centuries, was finally to lead up to Mary and Jesus.'² This would be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the principle under consideration, but it is not really involved in what

¹ Illingworth, *Divine Immanence*, p. 95.

² Lobstein, *The Virgin Birth of Christ*, p. 86.

has been said. For all that has been asserted is that a sinless man must have been altogether exceptional in his physical origin, and that, therefore, the normal conditions of birth are insufficient to account for him. Birth from a virgin, which is alleged of Christ, is a phenomenon altogether outside our observation, and we are not really competent to say how far the ordinary laws of inheritance from the mother's side would obtain in such a case. And, moreover, it must not be forgotten that Christ was, in our view, 'conceived by the Holy Ghost' as well as 'born of the Virgin Mary.' The Virgin Birth presupposes not only the absence of human fatherhood, but the presence and the power of the Divine Spirit. And 'if there was a Divine agency at work, however mysterious, we may be sure that it would at least refine all it touched. . . . Can we think of evil as living in contact with it—in contact of which we are meant to think as the closest and most organic that the mind can conceive?'¹ The operation of the Divine factor may well be believed to have purified the human factor which was associated with it.

Perhaps it might be argued on the other side that this last consideration (put forward by Dr. Sanday) helps to obviate the moral necessity for Christ's birth from a virgin. If the Divine Spirit,

¹ Sanday, *Critical Questions*, pp. 153, 154.

which was abundantly poured out upon Jesus, be thus a force of purification, may we not suppose that the inherited tendency to evil would be frustrated and removed by the Spirit's influence, even although Jesus were born of human parents in the normal way? This was Schleiermacher's suggestion. He supposed that 'all the natural conditions necessary to an ordinary human birth must have been present in the case of Christ's birth, but that to these there was added an absolutely creative act, which did away with the traducian sinful influence.'¹ I need not stay to point out that such an hypothesis provides no relief to a faith that is distressed by the assertion of miracle. Schleiermacher's 'absolutely creative act' is quite as abnormal and miraculous as birth from a virgin, while it provides an exceptional antecedent to the sinless life of Christ such as reason desiderates. All that need be maintained is that such an exceptional antecedent must be presupposed, if Christ be sinless; and that the assertion of His Conception by the Holy Spirit supplies what reason demands. We could not prove *a priori* that this exceptional antecedent might not have been provided in some other way, nor are we concerned to do so.

(3) Once more; we must read the story of the

¹ Martensen, *Christian Dogmatics* (Engl. tr. p. 276).

Virgin Birth in the light of the Resurrection, and in the light of the fact that the Child born of Mary was sinless. We must also read it in the light of the Incarnation, as presented both by St. John and St. Paul.

To St. John Christ was the Eternal Word 'made flesh' for man's sake. 'I am not of this world' (John viii. 23) is a keynote of his Christological doctrine. The Personality of Jesus was not human—it was the Divine Personality itself which had assumed human nature. And this doctrine of the Incarnation is at the heart of the most sacred and influential beliefs which sway Christendom to-day. Now, no prudent theologian will attempt to *prove* that the Incarnation involves a virgin birth. St. John never attempts such proof. Probably *a priori* proofs on high subjects of this sort are beyond our capacity. But it may at least be said that it would be extremely difficult to believe, of a being born in the normal way of human parents, that his personality was not essentially and fundamentally human, however abundantly the Divine Spirit might be poured out upon him. And such a being would not be the Incarnate Christ of St. John, on whom the Church has set her hopes. There have been in Christian history believers in the Virgin Birth who did not believe in the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation, as, *e.g.*, the early

Socinians ; but no instance is to be found of any who held the full doctrine of the Incarnation, as it is expressed in the Nicene Creed, who did not also accept the Virgin Birth. 'God of God' is a formula difficult to grasp, if on analysis we find that 'of God' does not exclude human fatherhood. There is a congruity between the words 'of one substance with the Father' and 'born of the Virgin Mary' which it is extremely difficult to explain away. *Talis decet partus Deum.*

St. Paul's representation of the Christ is quite differently conceived from that of St. John, and yet his Christology suggests the same inference. Not only does he speak of the pre-existence of Christ in explicit terms (Phil. ii. 6), a belief which is incompatible with the view that His Personality came into being as all finite personalities do, but he builds a majestic and stately argument on his conception of Christ as the Second Adam, which has been examined in chapter v. 'The first man is of the earth, earthy ; the second man is of heaven' (1 Cor. xv. 47). As the first man marks a critical point in the development of the race, so too does the Second Man. Each is an unveiling of the Divine purpose—a new beginning. To the thought of St. Paul, Adam does not more clearly stand for a fresh departure in the scheme of creation than does Christ. Christ is not the 'natural' outcome

of His nation and country ; He is not the mere product of evolution—He represents an interruption of the continuity of the human race. Not *a* man, but *the* Man, representative of humanity at its best, as Adam was representative of humanity at its worst ; not one man in the race, but ‘ the new Man—the Son of Man, in whom the race is gathered up.’¹ This is St. Paul’s teaching about Christ, and once again we should find it very difficult to retain it as true if we were obliged to believe that Christ was born of human parents, exactly as every other man has been born. St. Paul never thinks of *proving* the doctrine of the Virgin Birth ; he is not concerned with it immediately ; we need not even claim that it was to him a formulated dogma. It is most natural to suppose that he was aware of the fact ; but I bring forward his Christology now for the purpose of showing that, in any case, it is not only entirely consonant with the belief that Christ had no human father, but that it would be difficult to reconcile logically with the opposite opinion.

We may say, then, that the doctrine of the Incarnation as stated by St. Paul and St. John prepares us to read the evidence for the Virgin Birth with a new and anxious interest. For it would be harder, not easier, to accept the Incarna-

¹ See a letter in the *Life of Bishop Westcott*, ii. 308.

tion, could we not show cause for believing that the entrance of the Incarnate into the world was unlike a common human birth. At this point the infancy narratives of the Evangelists supply us with positive information which to all appearance comes from the most authoritative sources. It was not only because the Church was convinced of the *a priori* probability of this miracle and its congruity with the doctrine of the Incarnation, but because she was able to appeal to the plain record of the Gospels, that the article of the Virgin Birth received a place in the formal Creeds of the second century, a place which it has ever since maintained.¹

And yet it is sometimes urged, because the article is not insisted upon in the early sermons of the Apostles, and because it is not formulated in the Pauline letters of advice to the Christian communities, that therefore it may now be discarded from the Creed. Such a line of argument seems to betray a curious lack of perception of the wide difference between popular teaching and theological dogma. A Creed is not the same thing as a sermon,

¹ The *Apology* of Aristides was written about 130 A.D., and in it he speaks of the birth of Christ from a virgin in a way which suggests that this was an article in the Creed with which he was familiar (see *Cambridge Texts and Studies*, I., i. pp. 6, 25). And recent investigations of the origin of the Apostles' Creed lead to the conclusion that its earliest form, in which this article had already a place, is not later than 140 A.D. Kattenbusch would place it as far back as 100 A.D.

and the practical needs of the Christian life may be satisfied while the intellectual coherence of doctrine is but imperfectly understood. We need not doubt that many a good Christian man has lived and died without definitely formulating to himself the relations of the simple articles of his belief, and without any clear apprehension of their theological implications. He has not found it necessary to think about the article of the Virgin Birth. He is able to say, with joyful assurance, 'Jesus is Lord,' and that is enough for him. But when the Church proceeds to formulate her theology, she has to consider logic as well as life, and she has to take account of the interdependence of this doctrine and of that. For, in the end, a Creed which is not intellectually coherent and self-consistent will not serve the needs of practical life, however possible it may be for individuals temporarily to ignore certain aspects of the truth.

Considerations of this character help us to resolve the problem which is suggested by the silence of the earliest Christian preachers on the subject of Christ's Virgin Birth. Before this came into view Christ must have been accepted for what He was, the sinless, risen, incarnate Son of God. And to proclaim Him in these aspects was the primary object of their endeavour, as they are still the primary topics of the preaching of a Christian

missionary. It is even probable that in the early days of Apostolic preaching the secret of the Virgin Birth had not been divulged by the Virgin Mother. It was a secret which she would naturally and for obvious reasons guard with the most jealous reserve until it had become recognised among the circle of her friends and associates that her Son was indeed God incarnate in human flesh.¹ Not until that was believed would her wonderful experience be credited even by those who honoured her most. And there is no proof forthcoming that in the days of the Lord's public ministry He was regarded by those who followed Him as other than the son of the carpenter; nor could the contrary be asserted with confidence by a Christian teacher—still less could it be formulated in a Creed—until the positive testimony of His Mother had been made public and accepted as true by the primitive Christian society.

We are now invited by some to return to this early, indefinite, incoherent position as to the fatherhood of Jesus. We are assured that we shall thus get nearer to primitive Christianity, and that we shall thus remove a stumbling-block from

¹ In fact, scandalous stories were put in circulation by the Jews, who scoffed at the idea of the Virgin Birth of Jesus. They asserted that His father was a soldier named *Ben Pandera*, probably a corruption (as Dr. Harris has pointed out) of *Ben Parthena*, or Son of the Virgin.

the path of those who would follow Christ. But does any one really wish that the Christian Church should return to that imperfect apprehension of Jesus which was all that the Apostles reached while He was with them in the flesh ? ¹ That is the most primitive form of Christianity which we know, and it is far better so to follow Christ, even though we cannot answer the question ‘ Whose Son is He ? ’ than not to follow Him at all. It is not profitable to argue whether or no we should deny the title ‘ Christian ’ to one who regards Jesus as many in Galilee, who hung upon His words and profited by His example, must have done. But to suggest that this first stage in Christian knowledge is the goal of the Christian intelligence, and that the Church would do well to cast to the winds

¹ Coleridge seems to have been of this opinion : ‘ Were it asked of me, Do you, then, believe our Lord to have been the Son of Mary by Joseph ? I reply, It is a point of religion with me to have no belief one way or other. I am in this way like St. Paul, more than content not to know Christ *κατὰ σάρκα*.’ He had said just before : ‘ In my deliberate judgment the *Christopaedia* prefixed to the Third Gospel and concorporated with the First . . . was unknown to, or not recognised by, the Apostles Paul and John ; and instead of supporting the doctrine of the Trinity and the Filial Godhead of the Incarnate Word, . . . it . . . doth greatly weaken and bedim its evidences ’ (*Notes on Donne*, Sermon II.). So he speaks elsewhere of ‘ My belief that the (so-called) Ebionites of the first and second centuries, who rejected the *Christopaedia*, and whose Gospel commenced with the baptism by John, were orthodox apostolic Christians ’ (*On Waterland*, p. 286).

her formulated Christology, to abandon all profession of belief in God incarnate, Virgin-born, risen, ascended, would be disloyal—there is no other word for it—to the Spirit which was to guide her into all the truth. If the article of the Virgin Birth is to be removed from the Creed, it must be for some better reason than that it was not preferred to the Resurrection and the Atonement in Apostolic preaching, or that it was not known to the little company in the upper room before (in all probability) it had been told publicly by her who alone could tell it, and before the Holy Spirit had descended upon the Church.

The practical issue is this. Although the article of the faith which we have been considering may seem to occupy small space in the New Testament, its significance becomes the greater, the more it is pondered. It is congruous with the Incarnation, although the distinction between the Incarnation itself and the manner in which it pleased God to become incarnate must be maintained, not only as a point of theological propriety, but because the Bible and the Church alike teach us to place the emphasis on the former rather than on the latter. Many modernist theologians plead, indeed, that belief in this particular article of the Creed ought not to be required of lay church people, and even that disavowal of it need not be regarded as a

disqualification for the priesthood. But it is difficult to accept the logic of such pleas, while their charity will readily be admitted. Neither priest nor layman is entitled to repudiate part of his baptismal vow, to reconstruct the Creed to suit his individual predilection. It is surely one thing to refrain from placing the doctrine of the Virgin Birth on a level with the Incarnation and Resurrection, and quite another thing to admit that any one has a 'right' to discard it from his creed. No priest would be justified in baptizing a man who would not confess the Creed in its entirety; so much is clear. Why, then, should a priest be justified in acknowledging the 'right' of the same man to repudiate part of the Creed, after he has been baptized? To admit that different parts of the Creed may be held by individuals with different degrees of certainty would be a more intelligible ground to take, and concessions of this sort are probably made every day. But whatever relief may be afforded to perplexed consciences by such a consideration, it must be strenuously maintained that no individual has any right to membership of the Christian Church on other terms than those which the Church herself has laid down.

It has been suggested more than once that the Church of the Anglican Communion would do well to make it known that belief in the article of the

Virgin Birth is not essential for a candidate for Holy Orders. But it is seemingly forgotten that the Anglican Communion could not, of its own sole authority, take a step in this direction without cutting itself off from the rest of Christendom. A national Church has no more 'right' to repudiate an article of the Catholic Creed than has any of her members. The Creed is part of her Catholic inheritance which it is her sacred duty to preserve and to maintain in its integrity. Should she, indeed, at any time find it impossible with the increase of knowledge to recommend any particular article of her Creed to the intelligence of her children, she would be placed in a sore perplexity, a perplexity of a kind which she has never yet experienced. But it is not too much to say that the situation with which she is now confronted in regard to the article of the Virgin Birth is a quite different one. That article has not been proved impossible, nor is such a thesis put forward even by those who desire most earnestly that it should not be pressed upon individual consciences. Those who deny the miraculous cannot accept it, indeed, and they never could. But that is no new thing. Nor would it be true to say that the progress of biological science has made it more difficult to accept. Nor is it seemingly less congruous than of old with the rest of the Christian revelation. The

analytical criticism of the Gospels has, indeed, led to conclusions which prohibit appeals to the verbal inerrancy of every phrase as decisive of theological controversies ; but it would be going a great deal too far to assert that the Nativity narratives have been proved to be untrustworthy. On the contrary, analysis has revealed to us much of their significance which was ill understood in former generations. And in these circumstances, hasty action or hasty speech is very much to be deprecated. The Church will still, as of old, guard this article of her Creed ; not only because in the absence of demonstration of its impossibility she refuses to abandon a doctrine committed to her keeping, but because the narratives of the Evangelists are documents which must still be reckoned with, and above all because a closer study of the meaning of the article but brings into clearer view its intellectual coherence with the central doctrine of Christianity, the Incarnation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MAGNIFICAT

I

It has been argued by some scholars of repute ¹ that the true interpretation of St. Luke's narrative of the Visit of Mary to Elisabeth suggests that he meant to place the hymn *Magnificat* in the mouth of Elisabeth. A few MSS. of the Latin Gospels (*a*, *b*, *l**), indeed, actually read *et ait Elisabeth* in Luke i. 46; and it has been shown that Niceta of Remesiana,² a fourth-century bishop (to whom the authorship of *Te Deum* is now ascribed by many good scholars) followed this tradition, of which there are also traces in the Latin versions of Origen and Irenaeus. But there is no doubt that an overwhelming majority of MSS., versions, and early interpreters, are on the side of the traditional *And Mary said*, with which *Magnificat* is introduced in all printed editions of St. Luke's Gospel. Nothing ought to be allowed to set this aside,

¹ *E.g.* by Harnack *Das Magnificat der Elisabeth* (Sitz.-ber. of the Berlin Academy, 1900, p. 538 ff.); and by Burkitt, *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. vii, p. 220 ff.

² See A. E. Burn's edition of his *Works*, p. 76.

except some incoherence or inconsequence in the text thus attested, of so grave a character that internal evidence might, for once, be permitted to outweigh the external and objective testimony of the MSS. The *onus probandi* lies with those who ask us to abandon MS. authority; and unless it can be shown that there is something in the hymn itself, or in the phrases in its immediate context, which forbids us to believe that St. Luke intended to represent the Virgin as the speaker of it, we must continue to accept *And Mary said* as his introduction to *Magnificat*.¹

Let us ask then, are there any tell-tale phrases in the context which prove that the reading *And Mary said* cannot be in accordance with the original writer's intention? We are pointed, in reply, to the words *σὺν αὐτῇ* in Luke i. 56, which, it is urged, indicate that Elisabeth is to be taken as the speaker of the preceding verses. The sequence of the conversation is as follows:

i. 40. Mary greets Elisabeth.

i. 41-45. Elisabeth, being filled with the Holy Spirit, salutes Mary in the words *Blessed* (*εὐλογημένη*)

¹ I do not enter into the question as to whether the autograph may not have been *And she said*, no personal name being given, as Professor Burkitt and Professor Harnack and Bishop John Wordsworth have suggested. That may be a true conjecture; but the question of interest remains, To whom did St. Luke mean to ascribe the hymn?

art thou among women . . . and happy (μακαρία) is she that believed, because there shall be a fulfilment of the things which were spoken to her from the Lord.

i. 46-55. *And Mary said, Magnificat . . .*

i. 56. *And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.*

Now it is quite true that the pronoun 'her' in the last-quoted verse refers (according to the ordinary interpretation) to an antecedent (*sc.* Elisabeth) separated from it by a dozen verses. And it is quite probable that this awkwardness of phrase accounts for the variant reading *Elisabeth* in i. 46, as is suggested in the critical notes of Westcott and Hort. But, surely, awkwardness (or freedom) of this kind in the use of pronouns abounds in the Greek Bible. Take two or three instances :

(1) Gen. xix. 23-26 : 'The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot came unto Zoar. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven ; and He overthrew those cities and all the Plain and all the inhabitants of the cities and that which grew upon the ground. But his wife (ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ is the LXX) looked back from behind him . . .' Whose wife ? Lot's, without doubt, but the antecedent is a long way back, if purity and precision of style are demanded.

(2) Tobit xiv. 3-12 : ‘ Now he (Tobit) grew very old ; and he called his son, and the six sons of his son, and said unto him . . . *here follows a long charge of eight verses* . . . And while he was saying these things, he gave up the ghost in his bed ; but he was a hundred and eight and fifty years old ; and he buried him magnificently.’ Now the antecedent of the last ‘ he ’ is Tobias, who has not been mentioned during a speech of eight verses, much longer than *Magnificat*.

(3) Acts xv. 1-2. ‘ And certain men having come down from Judaea taught the brethren that “ except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses ye cannot be saved.” And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, they appointed that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question ’ ; *i.e.* καί τινες κατελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας . . . γενομένης δὲ στάσεως, καὶ ζητήσεως οὐκ ὀλίγης τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Βαρνάβᾳ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἔταξαν ἀναβαίνειν Παῦλον καὶ Βαρνάβαν κτλ. We ask what is the subject of ἔταξαν, ‘ they appointed ’ ? Probably it is the Christian brethren at Antioch ; but it might be the men ‘ from Judaea.’ And the Western Text of Acts has actually got the reading οἱ δὲ ἐληλυθότες ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ παρήγγειλαν αὐτοῖς τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ Βαρνάβᾳ καὶ τισιν ἄλλοις ἀναβαίνειν. This is a case

in which the awkwardness of the ordinary text seems to be responsible for the variant reading, exactly as in Luke i. 46, *Elisabeth* is read for *Mary* in a few Latin versions, owing to the distance of *αὐτῇ* from its antecedent in verse 56.

That is to say, there is no real difficulty in referring *αὐτῇ* to an antecedent a dozen verses back, when we recall the freedom in the use of pronouns throughout the Greek Bible, and remember that even in St. Luke's writings ambiguity is sometimes due to a like cause. *Αὐτῇ* is not as far removed from its antecedent as is the subject of the word 'buried' in Tobit iii. 12; and the passage just quoted from the Acts shows that St. Luke's occasional awkwardness in the construction of his sentences may lead to a variant reading and the consequent misinterpretation of a pronoun. So far as *σὺν αὐτῇ* in Luke i. 56 is concerned, there is nothing to show that it does not refer to Elisabeth, who was the speaker in verses 42-45.

We have, next, to ask if there is anything in the hymn itself which is more appropriate to Elisabeth than to Mary. It is urged that, in the absence of any indication of the speaker, it might be regarded as appropriate to either, and I recognise that, modelled as it is on the Song of Hannah—a point to which I shall come back later on—most of it would be suitable in the mouth of Elisabeth.

Comparison may fitly be made with the words of Hannah's prayer (1 Sam. i. 11), 'If thou wilt look on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid,' which are parallel to Luke i. 48, 'He hath regarded the lowliness of his handmaiden.' And it might be added that the words placed in the mouth of the barren woman in 2 Esdras ix. 45 show that *Magnificat* would be suitable enough in a case like that of Elisabeth: 'It came to pass after thirty years that God heard me, thine handmaid, and looked upon my low estate and considered my trouble and gave me a son' (*exaudivit me Deus ancillae tuae et pervidit humilitatem meam*). The Greek is not extant, but it is quite clear from the Latin version that the author of 2 Esdras (who wrote about the same time as St. Luke) would have felt that Luke i. 48*a* would be appropriate on the lips of Elisabeth.

This, however, does not prove that it would not be also appropriate on the lips of Mary, and I believe that there are definite indications (apart from *And Mary said* of Luke i. 46) that the Evangelist meant to assign it to her. For instance, the word δούλη of verse 48 (which goes back, as has been said, to Hannah's Song) is surely intended to be taken with ἡ δούλη κυρίου of verse 38. 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord' is all that Mary will say when her destiny is revealed to her; and when she breaks

out into thanksgiving she speaks of herself in the same phrase of humility.

Again, take the word μακαριοῦσιν in Luke i. 48 : ' All generations shall call me *blessed*, or *happy*.' Although it is from this verse that the Church has learnt to call the Virgin *Blessed*, yet μακαρία need not mean more than *happy*, and (as Professor Burkitt has reminded us) is a usual word for a ' *happy mother*.'¹ Indeed the verse 48*b* of *Magnificat* is but an adaptation of Leah's thanksgiving on the birth of Asher, μακαρία ἐγώ, ὅτι μακαρίζουσίν με πᾶσαι αἱ γυναῖκες.² The verb would be appropriate for Elisabeth; there is no doubt of it. But, again, surely St. Luke intended the use of the verb μακαριοῦσιν in *Magnificat* to correspond to and take up the salutation of Elisabeth to Mary in verse 45, μακαρία ἡ πιστεύασσα ὅτι ἔσται τελείωσις τοῖς λελαλημένοις αὐτῇ παρὰ κυρίου. Elisabeth greets Mary as *blessed* (εὐλογημένη) and the fruit of her womb as blessed (εὐλογημένος); but she also offers her congratulations upon the *happiness* in store for her. ' *Happy* is she that believed, for, etc.' I think that to miss this correspondence between Luke i. 45 and Luke i. 48 is to miss something that the

¹ *Beata Maria*, not *benedicta*, which would be the equivalent of εὐλογημένη in Elisabeth's salutation, but which has not been adopted by the Church as the designation of the Virgin.

² Gen. xxx. 13.

Evangelist intended to convey. And if the correspondence was intentional, then St. Luke meant *Magnificat* to be spoken by Mary, whether *Μαριάμ* in verse 46 was written by him or not.

Further, while Elisabeth might say (as Leah did) *μακαρίζουσίν με πᾶσαι αἱ γυναῖκες*, it would be a gross exaggeration for her to say *πᾶσαι αἱ γενεαί*. Zacharias had, indeed, been told of the son that she should bear, *πολλοὶ ἐπὶ τῇ γενέσει αὐτοῦ χαρήσονται* (i. 14); but the thankfulness of Elisabeth is not once connected with any anticipations of the future greatness of her son. She is humbly thankful that her 'reproach' has been removed (i. 25; cf. i. 36); that is all. Her exultation in vv. 42-45 is ascribed to her recognition of the supreme blessing in store for Mary, *i.e.* that she should be the mother of Messiah; and to pass from this to an utterance of thanksgiving for the lesser joy of her own motherhood (as we must suppose her to do, if *Magnificat* is hers) would be inexplicable at this point of the narrative. For *Magnificat* is clearly a hymn of exultation for mercies personal to the speaker (*μακαριοῦσίν με . . . ἐποίησέν μοι μεγάλα*).

And, more generally, it would be, as it seems, to rob St. Luke's narrative of its climax, if *Magnificat* were not spoken by Mary. For in that case, she would be represented as receiving in unbroken

silence the greeting and the sympathy of Elisabeth, which it was the object of her visit to elicit. Let us go through the story as it stands, and I believe we shall be impressed with its artistic completeness and its coherence.

The incident with which St. Luke connects the recitation of *Magnificat* is the visit of Mary to her kinswoman Elisabeth. Mary has learned from a heavenly messenger of the destiny in store for her ; and she goes in haste (μετὰ σπουδῆς)—how natural the story is !—to tell of her perplexity and her trembling hope to an older woman, who will sympathise and understand, for she, too, is soon to be a mother. And her confidence is not misplaced. Whatever others may think, Elisabeth greets her as *Blessed* (εὐλογημένη, favoured by God), and with quick intuition—with a Divine inspiration of sympathy—pours out impassioned words of joy and of reverent congratulation for the young Maiden who is to realise at last the dream of every Jewish woman of the house of David, by becoming the mother of the national Deliverer, the long-looked-for Messiah. And then the gladness of being understood,¹ of being believed, breaks out into humble thanksgiving to God who has counted her worthy of so great a destiny. ‘ And Mary said, *Magnificat*. ’

¹ This is well brought out by Lange, *The Life of Christ*, vol. i. p. 368 ff. (Eng. tr.).

To place *Magnificat* in the mouth of Elisabeth at this point would be prosaic indeed.

II

It has sometimes been thought that the Evangelist intends to represent the Virgin as giving utterance to this hymn of praise in a moment of prophetic or poetic inspiration, and, as it were, *extempore*. Such a view is, no doubt, possible, although it is not easy to understand how an extemporaneous thanksgiving could be afterwards recalled to memory and actually recorded. In moments of deep emotion, men and women are apt to express themselves more eloquently and more poetically than is their wont in the ordinary affairs of life.¹ The warnings and promises of the prophets are as often clothed in the language of poetry as in the language of prose ; and, indeed, in Hebrew it is not easy to distinguish between impassioned prose and poetry. We may grant that it is possible—although, surely, it is improbable—that *Magnificat* was the spontaneous outpouring of a thankful heart, stirred to its depths by a marvellous experience of God's favour. But, at any rate, St. Luke does not say that it was so. His statement is simply that the Hymn which we call *Magnificat* was Mary's response to the greeting


¹ Cf. 1 Cor. xiv. for prophetic utterances of this kind.

of Elisabeth; he does not say that it was an original composition of her own, or used by her for the first time.

We must examine the piece to see whether it is like an *extempore* utterance or whether, like the best lyric poetry, it is constructed with due regard to rhythm and balance. And when we thus examine it, we can hardly doubt that the words of Mary's thanksgiving are the words of an existing hymn, which she applied—perhaps with the modification of a word here and there—to her own circumstances and her own destiny. The hymn is, in part, appropriate to others besides the Blessed Virgin, and thus most of it would not be out of place if spoken by Elisabeth, as some persons hold it was intended by St. Luke to be.

I am not, however, convinced by Dr. Harnack's reasoning that the hymn is St. Luke's own composition; for I see little to favour such a thought. It is not Luke's habit to invent speeches for the persons who come into his narrative; the speeches in the Acts are not like the speeches in Thucydides, which are obviously 'made up' by the historian. St. Luke, on the other hand, ascribes the recitation of hymns of thanksgiving to Mary, to Zacharias, to Simeon, because he believes that they uttered them, not that he may add an artistic touch to his narrative. It is worth observing that he places

no such hymn in the mouth of Anna the aged prophetess, although he tells that she, like Simeon, 'gave thanks to God, and spake of Him to all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.'¹ But St. Luke gives no hymn here; he only gives us hymns where he has learned that they were actually used. And those that he has preserved for us have none of the characteristic marks of his own style; neither in language nor in thought are they in the least like the rest of his Gospel. They are no inventions or compositions of his.

 The striking similarity of *Magnificat* to the Song of Hannah in 1 Samuel has, of course, been noticed by every careful reader. In both we have as the theme the reversal of the world's judgments, the overthrow of the mighty and of kingdoms, the satisfaction of the hungry, the discomfiture of the rich. The speaker in both cases is an expectant mother who exults in the Divine Mercy which has been shown her, although one need not stay to emphasise the difference between the two cases. But the similarity in structure between the two Songs is so close as to suggest—what is in itself in no way improbable—that both are hymns in which Jewish women were accustomed to pour out their heart's thanksgiving. No race has ever

¹ Luke ii. 38.

thought more of the dignity and blessedness of motherhood than did the Jewish race, and the eager expectation of Messiah, which was the root of all their national hopes, would be most keenly felt by the young mothers of Israel. That we may see how intensely Jewish is the Hymn of the Virgin it is only necessary to set down some parallels from the Old Testament to its beautiful phrases. These will show that there is no single phrase which was not familiar to every pious Jew.

- i. 46. *My heart rejoiceth in the Lord* is the opening phrase of the Song of Hannah ; ¹
I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in
- 47. *the God of my salvation* is the climax of the prayer of Habakkuk.²
- 48. *If Thou wilt look on the affliction of thine handmaid* ³ was the prayer which Hannah prayed in her grief ; *the Lord hath respect unto the lowly* is the assurance of a Psalmist.⁴

Happy am I, for the daughters will call me happy (or *blessed*) ⁵ is Leah's exclamation of joy in the birth of a son, who though not hers would be counted as of her household.

¹ 1 Sam. ii. 1.

² Hab. iii. 18 ; cf. Ps. xxxv. 9 ; Isa. xxv. 9, lxi. 10.

³ 1 Sam. i. 11.

⁴ Ps. cxxxviii. 6.

⁵ Gen. xxx. 13.

49. *The Lord hath done great things for us*¹ is the cry of one Psalmist; *Holy and reverend is His Name*² is the call to adoration by another.
50. *The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him*³ is the assurance of yet another.
51. *Put on strength, O arm of the Lord*⁴ is a prophet's prayer. *Thou hast humbled the proud as one that is wounded: Thou hast scattered thine enemies with the arm of Thy strength*⁵ is a verse from the Greek version of the 89th Psalm.
52. *He poureth contempt upon princes:*⁶ *He overthroweth the mighty:*⁷ *He setteth up on high those that be low;*⁸ these are phrases from the Book of Job.
53. *He filleth the hungry soul with goodness*⁹ is from the Psalter; *The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich; He bringeth low, He also lifteth up*¹⁰ is, again, from the Song of Hannah.

¹ Ps. cxxvi. 3.² Ps. cxi. 9; cf. Isa. lvii. 15.³ Ps. ciii. 17.⁴ Isa. li. 9.⁵ Ps. lxxxix. 10.⁶ Job xii. 21.⁷ Job xii. 19; cf. Eccclus. x. 14.⁸ Job v. 11.⁹ Ps. cvii. 9.¹⁰ 1 Sam. ii. 7.

54. *He hath remembered His mercy and His faithfulness towards the house of Israel is from the 98th Psalm*¹; *Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob and the mercy to Abraham which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old*² is from the prophet Micah.

It is quite clear that *Magnificat* is a *cento* from the Old Testament. There is no distinctly Christian phrase in it, although every phrase is suggestive of a Christian meaning. Other parallels have been found to its language in the Sacred Songs of the Jews, gathered in the remarkable collection which was called the Psalter of Solomon.³ And Bishop Chase has suggested parallels from the ancient Prayers of the Synagogue.⁴ That is not surprising, for all alike have their roots in the Old Testament. The Advent Canticles of the Christian Church are the last notes of Hebrew song; they mark the moment of transition from Old Testament to New Testament, from the Law to the Gospel, from the Promises of Hope to their Consummation in Grace.

¹ Ps. xcvi. 3; cf. Isa. xli. 8.

² Mic. vii. 20.

³ See Ryle and James, *The Psalms of Solomon*, p. xci.

⁴ Chase, *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church*, p. 147.

III

But it is time to analyse the Hymn itself, and to seek to discover its leading thoughts. Hebrew poetry—and whether *Magnificat* was originally written in Hebrew or not,¹ it is constructed after the model of a Hebrew Psalm—was marked by attention to rhythm and the balance and parallelism of clauses, and not by rhyme or what we call metre. Now the balance, or repetition, of clauses in *Magnificat* is plain enough. *My soul doth magnify the Lord—My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*, the second clause repeating the thought of the first, of thanksgiving to Jehovah, the Saviour of Israel, whom Mary takes for her own. ‘God, my Saviour’ would be referred by a Christian to our Lord; and we cannot tell with what joyful premonitions of the future Mary may have used it; but the phrase is frequent in the Psalter of Solomon, and generally is used in connexion with mercies shown by Jehovah to the nation. Then comes a single line, giving the reason of the rejoicing:

For He hath had respect to the lowliness of His handmaiden.

¹ That *Magnificat* seems to reproduce the language of the LXX does not determine the matter, for the Greek translator (if the hymn be a translation) would naturally use the LXX, as we see in the Psalms of Solomon.

The strain of joy rises higher :

All generations shall call me happy.

The Mighty One hath done great things to me.

Holy is His Name.

And then at the end of the first stanza we have the keynote of *Magnificat* :

*His MERCY is on them that fear Him throughout
all generations.*

This is the master thought ; to this all leads up, and the thought is repeated, with glowing memories of the past, at the end of the second stanza :

He hath holpen Israel His servant . . .

*that He might remember MERCY to Abraham and
his seed for ever.*

MERCY is the keyword. In the first stanza the singer praises God for His overwhelming Mercy which rests upon her, as it will upon all who fear Him, for ever. She sings of personal mercies, and that with no loud protestations, but with a humble thanksgiving which is sacred indeed. And then, in the second stanza, the hymn bursts out uncontrollably—as it seems—into a pæan of national hope ; the usurping overlords of Palestine are scattered ; the mighty Roman governors are humbled ; the downtrodden Jew has come to his own again. And all this because of the Divine

Mercy which has never failed throughout the years of oppression—the Mercy promised in the far off past.

Mercy is the keyword of *Magnificat*. And as in so many of the Psalms, the devotion which begins with thoughts of self and of God's mercy to the individual issues in a larger and more generous thanksgiving for His mercy to the nation and to the Church which He has taken for His own.

The meaning of *Magnificat* is missed if it is sung to music which does not recognise this structure. It is in two stanzas, and both lead up to the same thought—of mercy. In the first stanza the individual is rejoicing in patient humility ; this is not to be sung with the crash of a full chorus. The second stanza breaks out into a triumphant *fortissimo* of praise ; and there is no good reason in the thoughts which it suggests for the habit which musical composers often have of ending with a faint and timid rehearsal of the promise to Abraham and his seed.¹

¹ The difference in thought between *Magnificat* and *Cantate Domino*, which is the alternative Canticle for Evensong in the services of the Anglican Church, is chiefly to be seen in this twofold structure of *Magnificat*, personal rejoicing first—national afterwards. In *Cantate Domino* (the 98th Psalm), we have in the first four verses most of the characteristic expressions of *Magnificat* ; that, of course, is the reason why it was

IV

The Song of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a Song of the Christian Church. It has been sung in daily public worship for nearly 1400 years, and the place which it occupies in the service of Evensong, between the reading of the Old Testament and New Testament, has a special appropriateness as we recall its occasion and its meaning. The Virgin looked back in thankfulness upon the promises to ancient Israel, and looked forward in trembling hope to the fulfilment which they were to receive. We too, as we hear the Old Testament read, feel that it is incomplete without the New Testament. It points onward to the Christ and His Kingdom. And of this *Magnificat* speaks. The Decline and Fall of the Empires of which the Hebrew prophets tell, are but illustrations and instances of that perpetual reversal of the world's judgments by God, which is so emphatically set forth in the Sermon on the Mount.

He hath scattered the proud. . . . Blessed are the poor in spirit.

selected as an alternative. 'The Lord hath *done marvellous things . . . with His holy arm . . . He hath declared His salvation . . . He hath remembered His mercy towards the house of Israel.*' But this is all *fortissimo*, and the more subdued rejoicing of a thankful heart for personal mercies finds no place in its jubilant phrases.

He hath exalted the humble and meek. . . .

Blessed are the meek.

*He hath filled the hungry. . . . Blessed are they
that hunger and thirst after righteousness,
for they shall be filled.*

The Beatitudes re-echo the phrases of *Magnificat*, and fill them with a more spiritual meaning. The contrast between the proud and the humble is the perpetual theme of both Old Testament and New Testament ; even as the spirit which can see God's mercy in His judgments no less than in His favours is in both commended as 'blessed.' And as *Magnificat*, with its hopes of securing salvation, its faith in the Divine *mercy*, is the daily hymn of the Church, so the daily prayer of the Church for each soul is, *O Lord, shew Thy mercy upon us : And grant us Thy salvation.*

CHAPTER IX

THE CONNEXION BETWEEN THE FIFTH AND SIXTH CHAPTERS OF 1 CORINTHIANS

THE sequence of events during St. Paul's stay at Ephesus, and the exact circumstances under which he wrote the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, are not altogether easy to determine, and the variety of the conclusions which have been reached by competent scholars may be taken to show that the evidence is insufficient for demonstration. A question upon which a good deal turns is raised by the language of 2 Corinthians vii. 12. Who are *ὁ ἀδικήσας* and *ὁ ἀδικηθεὶς*? Are they to be identified with the offending son and the injured father of 1 Corinthians v., as most of the older commentators supposed? Or is the allusion in 2 Corinthians vii. to some incident, now only matter for conjecture, and quite distinct from that which is the subject of 1 Corinthians v., as most recent editors hold? I do not think that we can give a quite confident answer to these questions, but I shall set down a few of the considerations which incline me towards the older (and now unfashionable) interpretation. Even if they do not convince

others, it may be worth while to call attention to some of the linguistic correspondences between 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians, and especially between 1 Corinthians v. and vi.

I have pointed out elsewhere ¹ that to understand 1 Corinthians it is necessary to remember its structure. This letter was written in answer to one which had reached St. Paul from Corinth, asking for guidance on certain points, and it contains, besides, references to painful news which had been reported to him as to the state of the Corinthian Church. He had been told of the factions which had arisen, and also of a scandalous case of impurity which had occurred. He devotes chapters i.-iv. to the matter of schism and faction, and chapters v., vi. to the discussion of sins of the flesh and the proper way to deal with them. Then he passes on to answer in detail the questions which the Corinthians had put to him in their letter, each separate topic on which they had asked for advice being introduced by *περὶ δέ . . . περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε, καλὸν ἀνθρώπῳ γυναικὸς μὴ ἅπτεσθαι* (1 Cor. vii. 1); *περὶ δὲ τῶν παρθένων* (1 Cor. vii. 25); *περὶ δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων* (1 Cor. viii. 1); *περὶ δὲ τῶν πνευματικῶν* (1 Cor. xii. 1); *περὶ δὲ τῆς λογίας* (1 Cor. xvi. 1). We are only concerned now with chapters v., vi.; and from the systematic arrange-

¹ *Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. iii. p. 7 ff.

ment of the letter and the circumstances which drew it forth, we should expect to find that these were concerned with the same topic. He has said what he has to say about schism, and before he goes on to answer special questions, he must deal with the only other topic which (so far as we know) came directly before him, in relation to the Corinthian Church, at this moment. Hence chapters v., vi., *prima facie*, ought to be connected with each other and distinct from the rest of the Epistle.

It is, then, unsatisfactory to find that the commentators treat chapters v. and vi. as unconnected by any definite bond. 'Verbindungslos' is Schmiedel's phrase. 'The close of the last paragraph suggests a wholly different subject,' says Lightfoot on chapter vi. 1. Stanley describes the beginning of chapter vi. as a 'digression on the lawsuits.' Bishop Robertson and Dr. Plummer say 'There is no real argumentative connexion with the preceding section.' Indeed, I do not find that any commentator treats chapter vi. as but the continuation of the argument of chapter v. Yet this I think we shall see is the simple fact, if we paraphrase chapters v.-vii. shortly :

'I hear with sorrow that a thing which even the heathen do not tolerate has appeared among you. A man has been guilty of sin with his stepmother. You do not feel the iniquity of this as you ought,

and are puffed up with your spiritual condition (πεφυσιωμένοι, v. 2; οὐ καλὸν τὸ καύχημα ὑμῶν, v. 6). I, then, pass judgment on the man and “deliver him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” Put him out of your fellowship.

‘I told you in a former letter not to associate with men of unclean life. Of course, you have to live in heathen society, and you will necessarily meet such people (τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου); I did not mean that you could avoid all dealings with them. But my point is that you must not keep company with *Christians* (cf. ἀδελφός, v. 11) who are habitual evil liverers in regard to sins of the flesh. To judge the heathen (τοὺς ἕξω) is for God, not for you. But you must judge members of the Christian society, and yourselves take cognisance of all such scandalous offenders as I am speaking of.

‘It is intolerable that you should allow any case (πρᾶγμα) to be tried before the heathen courts¹ (κρίνεσθαι ἐπὶ τῶν ἀδίκων, vi. 1; cf. vi. 6, ἀδελφὸς μετὰ ἀδελφοῦ κρίνεται, καὶ τοῦτο ἐπὶ ἀπίστων). The proper tribunal is a tribunal of the Church (vv. 2-5). Rather than drag such a case

¹ The Roman law under which a prosecution for adultery would be made was the *Lex Julia de adulteriis*. It is probable, however, that native Greek law would be enforced at Corinth, and this also recognised adultery as an indictable offence, the damages being assessed by the judges.

into the law courts it would be better for the injured party to endure the wrong that has been done him.

‘ I am sorry, indeed, to hear that various scandals of this kind have arisen in your midst, that husband and wife wrong (*ἀδικεῖτε*) each other and defraud (*ἀποστερεῖτε*) each other of what is due. Remember that evildoers of this kind shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

‘ Marriage is lawful, but it is not always expedient; some may choose to keep complete control over their own body (*οὐκ ἐγὼ ἐξουσιασθήσομαι ὑπό τινος*, vi. 12). In any case the body is not for unlawful lust; you should glorify God in your body as well as in your spirit.

‘ Here comes in, then, the answer to your question about marriage and celibacy. Celibacy is ideally best, but monogamous marriage is lawful. Only let married persons remember that they have surrendered that complete control of their own bodies, of which I spoke (*ἡ γυνὴ τοῦ ἰδίου σώματος οὐκ ἐξουσιάζει, κτλ.*, vii. 4). They must not defraud each other of what is due (*μὴ ἀποστερεῖτε ἀλλήλους*, vii. 5), lest Satan tempt them to what is unlawful.’

The rest of St. Paul’s answer as to the relative merits of celibacy and marriage need not detain us. But I submit that we obtain a quite clear view of the entire argument in chapters v., vi., and of the

connexion between them, if we recognise that in vi. 1-11 the Apostle is speaking, not of the impropriety of Christians ever appearing before heathen tribunals (although much of what he says would apply generally), but of the impropriety of sins of infidelity and adultery among Christians being left to such tribunals; *these* sins should be dealt with by Christian courts and judged by the Christian standards of purity, which are quite different from heathen standards.¹ The principles upon which unchastity and the like are condemned by a Christian are the principles expounded in vi. 12-20, which would not be intelligible to a heathen. Τὰ σώματα ὑμῶν μέλη Χριστοῦ ἐστίν. That could not be

¹ A missionary of long experience in India (Rev. John Hector) wrote to me in the following terms, when this argument was first printed in the *Expositor* (May 1907): When moral scandals arise among converts 'the chief thing the missionary is anxious about is to keep them out of the civil courts. Not that he wishes them hushed up, but that he wishes them to be dealt with, just as St. Paul wished them to be dealt with, by the Church itself. Only so, he knows, can the heinousness of sins against chastity or the sacredness of family life be brought home to the conscience either of the offenders or the offended. The offended, in the final issue, is really the whole Christian community; and it is only as the latter takes upon itself the responsibility of judging cases of the kind that it can be educated up to the Christian standard of morals. As to the offenders, Paul shows us how they should be dealt with: *severely*, that they may not make light of their sins, yet *tenderly*, that they may not be driven to despair, or finally lost to the Christian community.' This seems to me to be a valuable commentary on the episode under discussion.

urged in a heathen court ; but it goes to the root of the matter for a Christian. And accordingly St. Paul is indignant when he hears that a Christian man at Corinth has sought redress at the hands of the civil law for an offence which ought to be dealt with by the Christian law. Not only the son, but the father, is blameworthy—the son for his abominable sin, the father for seeking the aid of heathen courts in his desire to punish him. Both father and son, it is clear, were Christians, for St. Paul's rebuke of both presupposes this ; but the woman seems to have been a heathen, for nothing is said of the duty of the Christian community in regard to her future.

I have called attention above to the double occurrence of the word ἐξουσίαζειν, its significance in vi. 12 being made clear by its use in vii. 4, where the reference is not doubtful. So too ἀποστερείσθαι is a word of quite general application, but its meaning in vi. 8 seems to be fixed by its meaning in vii. 5. It means in both places 'to be deprived of conjugal rights.' Again ἄδικος, ἀδικεῖν, ἀδικεῖσθαι are, of course, common words for any kind of wrongdoers or unjust dealing ; but the lists which are given in v. 10, 11, and vi. 9, 10 sufficiently show the kind of sin which the Apostle has specially in his mind. Πλεονεξία may stand for any kind of self-aggrandisement or over-reaching of one's neighbour ; but its

use here is the same as in 1 Thessalonians iv. 6, τὸ μὴ ὑπερβαίνειν καὶ πλεονεκτεῖν ἐν τῷ πράγματι τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ, where the πλεονεξία that is condemned is the violation of the honour of a home. My first point, then, is that the πράγματα (vi. 1) which St. Paul urges should be brought before a Christian tribunal and not left to heathen adjudicators are cases of adultery or the like ; and that the ἀδικία of which he speaks throughout chapter vi. is the wrong which is done when domestic honour is hurt, the whole discussion being strictly relevant to the scandal that had recently occurred in the Christian community at Corinth (v. 1).

This view of the argument requires us to believe that the father who was injured so grossly by his son's sin was alive at the time of that sin, and at the time of writing ; for the burden of St. Paul's exhortation is that the father ought not to have dragged such a case before the heathen courts. By so doing he might win his cause, no doubt ; but a Christian community ought to judge of the wrong done on quite different principles from those of civil rights, and ought to punish the offender by the severest of spiritual discipline and not by the mere assessment of damages. That the father was alive at the time of his son's sin made the sin even more shocking than it would have been had the woman been a widow. And the sentence which was

to be passed was correspondingly severe. St. Paul directs the Corinthians *παραδοῦναι τὸν τοιοῦτον τῷ Σατανᾷ εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός*, a phrase which at any rate connotes excommunication from Christian privileges and Christian fellowship, and probably conveys also a hint of the punishments which lust brings in its train.

The meaning, however, of this sentence must be more closely examined. The purpose of the punishment to be inflicted was clearly remedial; not only the purification of the community, but the amendment of the sinner, is in view, for the man was to be 'delivered over to Satan,' in order that his fleshly passions might be eradicated (*εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός*) and thus that 'his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.' The phrase *παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ* occurs again in 1 Timothy i. 20, where St. Paul says that he has himself inflicted this punishment, *i.e.* of excommunication, upon the faithless and heretical Hymenaeus and Alexander, 'in order that they may be taught not to blaspheme'; in this passage, as in the one before us, the purpose of the sentence is not vindictive or punitive only, but remedial, for the ultimate benefit of the person punished. Certainly *παραδοῦναι τῷ Σατανᾷ* is a very strong phrase, but then St. Paul regarded the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of Satan as exclusive. To excommunicate a man was, for him,

to hand the man over to Satan. *Τίς συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελίαρ*; 'What concord has Christ with Belial?' is a question (2 Cor. vi. 15) to which his answer is not doubtful. The force of the paragraph (2 Cor. vi. 14-vii. 1) depends entirely on this incompatibility of Christendom and heathendom. To 'come out' from among the heathen was the only right course for a Christian man, and thus, conversely, to expel a man from the Christian society was to deliver him over to darkness and Belial.

We now proceed to inquire if the offender of 1 Corinthians v. 1, whose case suggested the discussion in 1 Corinthians v.-vi., is the same as the offender of 2 Corinthians ii. 5 f. and vii. 12 f. *Prima facie* the two should be identified. *Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*, and an exegesis which has to presuppose incidents and disputes of which we know nothing can never be quite convincing, nor ought it to be preferred to an exegesis which limits itself to the data of the text. But to suppose—as some writers do—that in 2 Corinthians vii. 12 St. Paul is alluding to an insult or injury inflicted on himself by a member of the Corinthian Church,¹ or to a quarrel between two

¹ Dr. Moffatt goes so far as to say 'It should no longer require to be proved that this offender is not the incestuous person of 1 Cor. v. 1, but some one who had wronged Paul himself' (*Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, p. 122).

Corinthians other than that arising out of 1 Corinthians vi. 1, is to introduce an hypothesis which cannot be justified *unless there is something in the language of the later passage inconsistent with the language of the former*. This is what we have to consider.

The first argument that is brought against the identification is that the injured person (ὁ ἀδικήθεις) of 2 Corinthians vii. 12 seems to have been alive at the time of writing, while it is urged that this presupposes a degree of wickedness on the part of the offender (ὁ ἀδικήσας) that is not contemplated in 1 Corinthians v. In the adultery case of 1 Corinthians v. it is assumed by many commentators, *e.g.* by Schmiedel (whose examination of these passages is very elaborate) that the father was dead. But of this there is no hint in St. Paul's language. On the contrary, as I have pointed out above, the situation which had arisen presupposes that the father was alive, for otherwise he could not have brought the case before the law courts. Once the connexion between 1 Corinthians v. and 1 Corinthians vi. is realised, we see that the father must have been alive at the time of writing; and thus there is no reason, so far as that goes, to prevent us from identifying him with ὁ ἀδικήθεις of 2 Corinthians vii. 12. The sin that is in question is as the sin of Reuben (Gen. xxxv. 22).

Further, it is noteworthy that the words *ἀδικήσας*, *ἀδικηθείς* of 2 Corinthians vii. 12, bring out exactly that aspect of the sin which is dwelt upon in 1 Corinthians vi. 7-9. It was that aspect of it which had caused the public scandal that is the object of St. Paul's solicitude. The father had, in the rôle of an 'injured' party, gone before the heathen courts; whereas it was the duty of the Christian community to pass judgment in accordance with the distinctive principles of Christian purity. It was for this reason that the Apostle was so much relieved by the tidings which Titus brought him, viz., that the Corinthian Christians had acted on his direction and had taken the case into their own hands. They had proved themselves 'pure' (2 Cor. vii. 11). The object of his intervention was not that he espoused the side of either party in this miserable litigation (*οὐχ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος οὐδὲ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικηθέντος*, 2 Cor. vii. 12), but that he might awaken the Corinthian Church to a sense of what was due to itself and to him as its founder (*ἕνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδὴν ὑμῶν τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ*, 2 Cor. vii. 12; cf. 2 Cor. ii. 9, *εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ ἔγραψα ἵνα γνῶ τὴν δοκιμὴν ὑμῶν, εἰ εἰς πάντα ὑπήκοοί ἐστε*). He had written his rebuke not only that the offender might be reformed, but to test the acceptance by the Corinthians of his apostolic

authority (cf. 1 Cor. v. 3, 4). Both from 1 Corinthians v. and from 2 Corinthians ii. and vii., it is clear that the object of his indignation was rather the scandal to the Church caused by the sin and by the way in which it had been dealt with than the wrong done to the father by his wicked son. He is anxious that the Christian community should take cognisance of such offences, and judge them according to the principles of the Christian revelation. When he hears from Titus that this has been done he is rejoiced, and the measure of the punishment inflicted on the offender is a secondary matter.

This enables us, I submit, to meet the second objection which is urged against the identification of ὁ ἀδικήσας of 2 Corinthians vii. 12 with the sinful person of 1 Corinthians v. 1. It is said that the gentleness of St. Paul's language in 2 Corinthians ii. 5-11 is quite inconsistent with the heinousness of the offence described in the earlier Epistle. This argument was first put forward by Tertullian in his treatise, *De Pudicitia*. Tertullian is arguing, it must be remembered, in support of his severe view that sins of the flesh are unpardonable for Christians, and that repentance is more competent in such cases for heathens than for the baptized. It is essential to his position that he should refuse to identify the man whom St. Paul forgives in

2 Corinthians ii. and vii. with the man whose condemnation he directs in 1 Corinthians v. ‘*Alius ergo erat, cui voluit sufficere increpationem; siquidem fornicator non increpationem de sententia eius retulerat, sed damnationem*’ (*De Pud.* 14).

No one is likely now to be convinced by Tertullian’s reasoning, for it is no principle of Christian discipline—nor, despite Tertullian’s vehemence, was the principle ever adopted by the Church—that severity must be unrelenting when the offender is penitent. The purpose of the excommunication ordered in 1 Corinthians v. 5 was remedial, so far as the offender was concerned; he was ‘to be delivered over to Satan . . . that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord.’ But if this punishment be not tempered with mercy, Satan may ‘get the better’ of the offender and of his judges (*ἵνα μὴ πλεονεκτηθῶμεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σατανᾶ*, 2 Cor. ii. 11). The man was only ‘delivered over to Satan’ *εἰς ὄλεθρον τῆς σαρκός*, but care must be taken lest Satan rob the Church of his soul. The latter passage plainly points back to the former one, as the introduction of the thought of ‘Satan’s devices’ shows.

Apart, however, from this verbal correspondence, it seems to be impossible, unless we accept Tertullian’s view, to refuse to identify the offender of 2 Corinthians ii. and vii. with the offender of

1 Corinthians v., on the score that the language of St. Paul in the later passage is the language of forgiveness and charity. The only difficulty is in the words of 2 Corinthians vii. 12: 'Although I wrote to you, I wrote not for his cause that did the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered the wrong, but that your earnest care for us might be made manifest unto you in the sight of God.' This, it may be said, is inconsistent with 1 Corinthians v., where certainly one of the causes of his writing was that the offender should be punished and recovered. But it is a not infrequent idiom (it occurs in all literature) to speak of the less important or (for the moment) less prominent aspect of a transaction as if it were non-existent. The important object which St. Paul had in view when writing 1 Corinthians v., vi. was the stimulation of the Corinthian Church to take cognisance as a society of moral offences among its members. To assert its authority in such cases was, in a sense, to assert *his* authority, and he describes this here by a gentle periphrasis, 'that your earnest care for us might be made manifest.' This was the real motive of his letter, not at all that the offender should be punished (which was only a side issue) or that the aggrieved party should be satisfied.

The reason why this very unpleasant episode is worthy of careful examination is that upon the view

which we take of it depends the view which we take of the relation between the First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians ; and this again affects the question as to the integrity of the Second Epistle, which has been raised afresh in England of late years. I do not know that the connexion between chapters v. and vi. of the First Epistle has been suggested by others, and it may be that even those who accept it will not accept the rest of the argument, which seems to me to favour the identification of the offender of 2 Corinthians ii. vii. with him of 1 Corinthians v. On this subject there is much more to be said, but as I have discussed it fully elsewhere,¹ I do not repeat the arguments.

¹ *Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. iii. p. 15 ff.

CHAPTER X

THE DEATH OF JUDAS

THE two brief accounts, seemingly independent of each other, given in St. Matthew's Gospel (xxvii. 3-10), and in the Acts (i. 18, 19) respectively, of the fate which overtook Judas are not easy to reconcile.

The earliest extant account, *i.e.* St. Mark's (followed also by St. Luke), of the bargain made with Judas, simply says that the chief priests 'promised to give him money' (Mark xiv. 11; Luke xxii. 5). Nothing is told in this narrative either of the amount of the bribe, or of the way in which it was ultimately expended, or of the fate of the traitor. The writer of the First Gospel has a good deal to tell on these points. He says that the price paid was 'thirty pieces of silver' (Matt. xxvi. 15), and it is to be noted that he uses here the words of Zechariah xi. 12, ἔστησαν τριάκοντα ἀργύρια. He tells also that Judas, driven by remorse, brought the money back to the priests, and that he then went away and hanged himself (ἀπελθὼν ἀπήγγατο, Matt. xxvii. 5). The priests, regarding

the money as the price of blood, would not put it into the treasury, but bought therewith the Potter's Field (τὸν Ἀγρὸν τοῦ Κεραμέως) 'to bury strangers in: therefore that field was called the Field of Blood (Ἀγρὸς Αἵματος) until this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, etc.'

Upon this we first observe that the author of the First Gospel is particularly prone to quote the Old Testament: he finds prophetical prevision of the Christ more frequently than any other Evangelist.

Next, he does not quote here with accuracy from any texts now known to us. The prophecy cited is not from Jeremiah, but (apparently) from Zechariah; and further, the passage is quoted in a form which does not agree either with the Hebrew or the LXX of Zechariah, as will be seen by a comparison. Whether he is actuated by a desire to harmonise the prophecy and the narrative, must be considered.

The Revised Version of Zechariah xi. 12, 13, following the Masoretic text, gives:

'So they weighed for my hire thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them unto the potter, in the house of the Lord.'

The LXX has :

Καὶ ἔστησαν τὸν μισθὸν μου τριάκοντα ἀργυροῦς. καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς μέ, Κάθες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον καὶ σκέψομαι εἰ δόκιμόν ἐστιν, ὃν τρόπον ἐδοκιμάσθη ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν. καὶ ἔλαβον τοὺς τριάκοντα ἀργυροῦς καὶ ἐνέβαλον αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον.

This the Evangelist quotes in the form :

Καὶ ἔλαβον τὰ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια, τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ, καὶ ἔδωκαν (v. 1. ἔδωκα) αὐτὰ εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν τοῦ κεραμέως, καθὰ συνέταξέν μοι κύριος.

If the context of the Zechariah passage be read, it will be seen that certain shepherds having neglected the unhappy 'flock of slaughter,' the prophet 'fed' them for a time in obedience to the command of Jehovah. Wearying of them, he ceased from his work, breaking his staff Beauty, the token of the covenant between him and the people. 'And I said unto them, if ye think good, give me my hire ; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my hire thirty pieces of silver,' etc., as quoted above from the R.V. There is, then, no apparent parallel as to character or conduct between the recipient of the thirty silver pieces in Zechariah and Judas, for the prophet was no traitor, but had earned his reward by the faithful discharge of duty. Next, we

notice that the meaning of casting the money 'unto the potter' (according to the Masoretic text) is to indicate how contemptible a sum it was, the money-value of a slave (Exod. xxi. 32). The Syriac version puts a different complexion on the action by rendering 'into the treasury' instead of 'unto the potter'; that is, according to the Syriac, the money paid as hire to the prophet was treated as Jehovah's due: it was not put to his own uses by Zechariah, but paid 'into the treasury.' Yet another turn is given to this perplexing piece of symbolism by the LXX. As is shown by the Greek cited above, the LXX understood the motive of casting the money to the potter to be that the silver might be tested, to ascertain whether it were good or base coin. But neither in Hebrew nor Syriac nor LXX is there any mention of a 'potter's field,' or of the purchase of one; nor is there anything which would naturally suggest such a thing, either in the Zechariah passage or in the chapters of Jeremiah (xviii., xix.) which speak of a 'potter.'

Thus we arrive, at any rate, at one certain conclusion, viz.: that the purchase of the potter's field recorded in the First Gospel is not evolved by the writer's imagination out of the Zechariah passage. He must have been working on a tradition which, quite independently, connected Judas and a 'Potter's Field.' And there is another inference

which we may draw, though not with the same certainty. Freely as the writer of Matthew xxvii. 9 has dealt with the original in the quotation which he makes, and although it is quite clear from Matthew xxvi. 15 that he has the Zechariah passage in his mind all through, he can hardly be accused of having rehandled his prophetic text in the interests of his narrative. For he leaves out the special point in the episode in Zechariah to which his narrative presents the most striking parallel. He omits to quote the words εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου which describe the situation of the χωνευτήριον of the LXX, into which the money was cast. Yet of Judas he had written (v. 5), ῥίψας τὰ ἀργύρια εἰς τὸν ναόν. The Evangelist's omission of Old Testament words, which would serve well as a prefigurement of this point, is, on any hypothesis, remarkable.

We may say, then, of St. Matthew's narrative, that it rests upon a tradition *independent of the prophecy cited*; the applicability of which is, in truth, by no means apparent. And the salient features of the tradition were these: (a) Judas, stricken by remorse, returned the money paid him; (b) He hanged himself in despair; (c) the priests with the money bought a field called the 'Potter's Field,' which thenceforth was called Ἀγρὸς Αἵματος; (d) The field was used as a cemetery for foreigners.

Let us now take up St. Luke's account in the Acts. It runs as follows :

Οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἐκτήσατο χωρίον ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας, καὶ πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος, καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ. καὶ γνωστὸν ἐγένετο πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ἱερουσαλήμ, ὥστε κληθῆναι τὸ χωρίον ἐκεῖνο τῇ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν Ἀκελ-δαμάχ, τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χωρίον Αἵματος (Acts i. 18, 19).

There are marked differences between this and St. Matthew's narrative.

(a) Nothing is said of Judas's remorse, nor is he represented as returning the money. (b) His death is not self-inflicted, nor was it caused by hanging ; it is described as due to a fall and a consequent rupture of the abdomen. (c) He himself is said to have bought a field with his wages, whereas St. Matthew tells that it was bought by the priests. (d) Nothing is said by St. Luke of the purpose for which the field was used after the death of Judas. (e) St. Luke knows nothing of its having been a ' Potter's Field.' (f) According to St. Matthew, the ' blood,' which gave its name to the field, was the blood of Christ shed through Judas's treachery ; according to St. Luke, it was the blood of Judas by which the field was defiled.

The only point common to the two accounts is that the name by which the field was known in the next generation was an Aramaic word which

was variously translated Ἀγρὸς Αἵματος and Χωρίον Αἵματος by St. Matthew and St. Luke. St. Luke gives a transliteration of this Aramaic name; he says it was Ἀκελδαμάχ, that is, he understands it as אַקֶּלְדַּמָּאֵךְ, 'a Field of Blood.' Ἀκελδαμάχ, is, no doubt, a possible transliteration of this Hebrew, for we have other instances of final א being represented by the Greek χ; as, *e.g.*, in the equation Σιράχ = אֶרַח. But we should certainly not *expect* a final χ, although it might be defended, if the last part of the Aramaic title were אַךְ; the presence of χ suggests rather that the Aramaic title ended with the letters מַךְ. Now it is remarkable that מַךְ = κοιμῆσθαι, so that κοιμητήριον, 'cemetery,' would be the exact equivalent of אַקֶּלְדַּמָּאֵךְ. And Klostermann has suggested that this was really the name by which the field was known to the native Jews, and that we have here a corroboration of St. Matthew's tradition that it was used 'to bury strangers in' (Matt. xxvii. 7). We have, then, to suppose that the name became corrupted in popular speech into אַקֶּלְדַּמָּאֵךְ, and that at the time when the Acts and the First Gospel were written, it was generally pronounced in the latter way. This would be like the corruption of (say) 'Bodyfield' into 'Bloody-field' in English, and is a possible transformation. Whether it took place or not, however, the concurrence of the two independent accounts leaves

us in no doubt that a field, commonly called the 'Field of Blood,' was associated in the popular mind with Judas and his hire; and there is no reason for refusing to accept St. Matthew's statements that it had been formerly used for a potter's field or pit, and was, at the time when he wrote, used as a burial-place for foreigners. These are points as to which tradition was little likely to be mistaken, and—as we have seen—there is nothing in the prophecy quoted by St. Matthew which could have suggested them.

We now turn to the points of divergence between St. Matthew's narrative and the Acts, and they compel us to regard the two writers as following independent traditions. The efforts that have been made to bring them into correspondence are but futile. The Vulgate boldly combines the narratives by reading *suspensus crepuit* in Acts i. 18, and an older Latin version quoted by Augustine had *et collum sibi alligavit et deiectus in faciem disruptus est medius*.¹ But this is to alter the text in the interests of the harmoniser. It has been supposed (as in the Vulgate) that Judas having hanged himself, his body fell to the ground by the breaking of the rope, or that he did not succeed in

¹ Blass actually inserts *καὶ κατέδησεν αὐτοῦ τὸν τράχηλον* in the 'Roman' text of Acts i. 18, relying on this passage from Augustine.

his attempt at suicide but died of a fall afterwards. But these hypotheses are only expedients adopted to evade the plain divergence of the narratives. The one fact which we may regard as established by both accounts of Judas's death is that it took place within a few days after his treachery. It is just as clear in Acts i., as if it were explicitly stated, that Judas was dead when St. Peter addressed the assembled disciples with the view of electing a successor to him in the Apostolate. Consequently the hypothesis of a *lingering* death due to a disease like dropsy or elephantiasis may be set aside. Nevertheless, such an hypothesis, however improbable it may seem, had wide currency in the early Church, and it was based on a statement of Papias.

Papias, whose words have come down to us in various forms, says that Judas swelled up to an enormous size, and that his death was caused (according to one version) by a fall, or (according to another) by a passing wagon.¹ He says nothing of suicide. It is probable that Papias read *πρησθείς*, 'swelled up' (a reading which is found in the Armenian Catena on the Acts), for *πρηνής* in Acts i. 18; but it is entirely unlikely that this was the

¹ Πρησθείς γὰρ ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον τὴν σάρκα, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι διελθεῖν ἀμάξης ῥαδίως διερχομένης, ὑπὸ τῆς ἀμάξης πταισθέντα τὰ ἔγκατα ἐγκενωθῆναι is the form of Papias's story as reported by Apollinaris of Laodicea in Cramer's Catena on St. Matthew.

original reading. Papias's story, which enters into gruesome and repulsive details, has several parallels in folklore literature,¹ one example of which is apposite to our text and must be quoted here. It occurs in the *Acta Thomae*, § 33. The legend tells that a dragon killed a young man by his bite and was compelled by the Apostle to suck the poison out of the wound, and then ὁ δράκων φυσηθεὶς ἐλάκησε καὶ ἀπέθανε καὶ ἐξεχύθη ὁ ἰὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ χολή. The dragon having thus burst asunder was swallowed up in a chasm which opened in the earth, and the Apostle commanded houses to be built upon the site ἵνα οἴκησις γένηται τοῖς ξένοις, 'that it might be a dwelling-place for strangers.' We seem to have here reminiscences of the Judas story; the rare word ἐλάκησε and the word ἐξεχύθη recalling Acts i. 18, while the last sentence about the use to which the site was put suggests Matthew xxvii. 7. But the *swelling up* of the dragon is not necessarily derived from Papias. Dr. Rendel Harris has pointed out that in folklore tales this was a common fate for evildoers, and it is probable that both Papias and Leucius (or whoever was the author of the *Acta Thomae*) are building on the same superstition. But all the information that

¹ See Rendel Harris, *Did Judas really commit Suicide?* in the *American Journal of Philology* for July 1900, a highly interesting paper.

Papias's story gives us as to the death of Judas is that it was regarded in his day as a natural death and not a suicide. So far Papias supports the Acts, rather than St. Matthew ; but I cannot think that there is any reasonable probability that *πρησθείς* was the original reading for *πρηνής* in Acts i. 18, or that the death of Judas, which, according to both canonical accounts, took place within a few days of his treachery, was a gradual death due to a lingering disease.

One other possibility as to the narrative in the Acts should not be overlooked. The speech of Peter (Acts i. 16 ff.), and indeed the whole Lucan account of the election of Matthias, have reference both explicit and implicit to the fulfilment of prophecy, and more particularly to the fate of Judas as foreshadowed in Psalm cix. May it not then be the case that, as Strauss thought, the words of Psalm cix. 18, 'It came into his inward parts like water and like oil into his bones,' suggested that a dropsical swelling was the appropriate fate of Judas (cf. Num. v. 22) ? This might possibly account for the Papias legend, but I cannot believe that it is a sufficient explanation of Acts i. 18. For it must be repeated that St. Luke knows nothing of a lingering death or of a gradual swelling up of the body of Judas, which are indeed quite inconsistent with his narrative. There is nothing in

Psalm cix. or in Psalm lxix. which would suggest
*πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα
τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ.*

It appears, then, as the result of this investigation, that while the narrative of the First Gospel was composed with the idea of prophetic fulfilments in the writer's mind, and while the narrative of the Acts was overlaid in the next generation with details borrowed from folklore literature, we have no right to say either that Matthew xxvii. 1-9 was evolved out of Old Testament prophecies or that Acts i. 18, 19, is a mere piece of folklore. The two narratives have in common the death of Judas within a few days after Gethsemane and the field Aceldamach that was bought with the wages of his treachery. They differ as to whether his death was self-inflicted or not, and as to whether it were he or the priests who purchased the field. We cannot reconcile these divergences ; our knowledge is insufficient for the purpose, even supposing that a reconciliation were possible. But it may be maintained—and I should myself be disposed to maintain—that the vivid and striking narrative of Matthew xxvii. 1-9 is more likely to present us with a true version of the facts than the short explanatory note (for it is no more) inserted in the middle of St. Peter's speech by the author of the Acts.

CHAPTER XI

THE TRADITIONS AS TO THE DEATH OF JOHN, THE SON OF ZEBEDEE

THE opinion generally entertained in the Church as to the death of John the son of Zebedee, in Asia Minor, in extreme old age, goes back to the last quarter of the second century, and rests upon the direct statement of Irenaeus. A theory has been advanced in recent years that a confusion has here been made between John the son of Zebedee and another John, commonly called 'John the Elder,' and that it is to the latter that the tradition accepted by Irenaeus really refers, while the truth about the former has been preserved in an obscure paragraph ascribed to Papias, which tells us that he suffered martyrdom, as his brother James did, and that he was 'killed by Jews.'¹ I propose to set out the reasons which seem to me to show that this story of the 'red martyrdom' of John is wholly untrustworthy, and that we have no sufficient ground for rejecting the venerable tradition which assures us that he lived to be an old man,

¹ This is the view taken by Schwartz in his book, *Ueber den Tod der Söhne Zebedaei*.

and that he did not come to a violent end. The determination of the question is of considerable historical importance, as the conclusion we reach in regard to it affects very seriously the evidence for the ascription of the Fourth Gospel, and also of the Apocalypse, to John the son of Zebedee, in which Christendom has acquiesced for many centuries.¹

1

We must begin by summarising briefly the witness of Irenaeus to what may be called the 'traditional' view. First, then, for Irenaeus there is only one person called John belonging to the Apostolic age (besides John the Baptist, who does not here come into consideration). Unlike Papias, he says nothing about a second 'John.' The person whom he knows by this name is the person who was associated with St. Peter in Acts iii. 1²—i.e. he was John the son of Zebedee. He is generally described as 'John the disciple of our Lord'³; but he is also reckoned as one of the 'Apostles,' as the following phrases will show. Of the Asian elders, Irenaeus says: 'Quidam autem eorum non solum

¹ As to whether or not the only John of Ephesus was the son of Zebedee, 'all depends upon the truth of the story of this Apostle's death' (Sanday, *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 252).

² *Haer.* iii. 12, 3.

³ ὁ μαθητὴς τοῦ κυρίου: *Haer.* ii. 22, 5; iii. 11, 1; iv. 20, 11; *Ep. ad Victorem*.

Ioannem sed et alios apostolos viderunt' ¹; and again, μετὰ Ἰωάννου τοῦ μαθητοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν καὶ λοιπῶν ἀποστόλων ² the context showing that the title 'Apostles' in these passages refers to the original Twelve. This John, disciple and apostle, is, for Irenaeus, the author both of the Gospel and the Apocalypse, as many quotations show. And the place of his residence and his long life are thus described :

ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ἐκκλησία ὑπὸ Παύλου μὲν τεθεμελιωμένη, Ἰωάννου δὲ παραμείναντος αὐτοῖς μέχρι τῶν Τραϊανοῦ χρόνων, μάρτυς ἀληθὴς ἐστὶ τῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων παραδόσεως.³

That is, he lived in Ephesus until the times of Trajan, who became Emperor in the year 98 of our era.⁴

Now, Irenaeus wrote about the year 185, and his statements about the son of Zebedee are worthy of special attention. To begin with, his youth, or part of it, was spent at Smyrna, for he sat at the feet of Polycarp as a disciple. And the broad facts as to St. John's later life at Ephesus (or the fact that it was not John the son of Zebedee, but John the Elder, who lived there) must have been

¹ *Haer.* ii. 22, 5, where the Latin version only is extant.

² *Ep. ad Victorem.*

³ *Haer.* iii. 3, 4; cf. also ii. 22, 5.

⁴ According to one interpretation of *Haer.* v. 30, 3, Irenaeus also is responsible for the statement that John 'was seen' at the close of Domitian's reign. (See Chase, *Journal of Theol. Studies*, April 1907, p. 431.)

the common property of the Asiatic churches when Irenaeus lived in that region as a boy. How could he have been misled as to such a matter? ¹ Then, again, Irenaeus reports that Polycarp used to tell of 'his intercourse with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord.' ² If we are to reject the tradition which Irenaeus reports as to the son of Zebedee's old age on the score that he may be confusing him with the enigmatical 'John the Elder,' we must assume that Irenaeus totally misunderstood what Polycarp had said, and that whereas the information that Polycarp gave him had really related to John the Elder, he had erroneously supposed it to relate to the son of Zebedee, and, furthermore, had never suspected the existence of that second 'John' to whom Polycarp had referred. This is, *prima facie*, a highly improbable theory; but there is no way out of it, unless we are prepared to admit—as I believe we must—that Irenaeus made no mistake, and that the tradition which he reports as to the old age of

¹ The same question may be asked about the testimony of an earlier writer than Irenaeus, viz. Hegesippus. 'It is very difficult to believe that if St. John had suffered martyrdom in Palestine he [Hegesippus] would not have been aware of it. And if he had heard the story and given credence to it, he could not have said that the Apostle was sent to Patmos by Domitian, and lived at Ephesus under Nerva' (Lawlor, *Eusebiana*, p. 96).

² τὴν μετὰ Ἰωάννου συναναστροφὴν ὡς ἀπήγγελλε, καὶ τὴν μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν τῶν ἐωρακότων τὸν κύριον (*Ep. ad Florinum*).

John the son of Zebedee—for Irenaeus knows of no second John—goes back to Polycarp.

This is the tradition which was generally prevalent in the early Church. Tertullian, for instance, writing about the year 199, tells that John came to Rome, and that an unsuccessful attempt was there made to do away with him by plunging him in a cauldron of boiling oil.¹ Tertullian adds that he was subsequently banished to an island; and this banishment, according to Eusebius, took place in the time of Domitian, the island being Patmos. Eusebius gives the authority of *ὁ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν ἀρχαίων λόγος*, for the statement that John moved from Patmos to Ephesus at the accession of Nerva, *i.e.* about the year 96.² These traditions are fully in accordance with the witness of Irenaeus as to the last days of John having been spent at Ephesus.

And, finally, a contemporary of Irenaeus may be cited—no less a person than the Bishop of Ephesus, Polycrates, who could not have been mistaken as to the traditions of his own see. Writing to Victor of Rome (who died in the year 202) on the Paschal

¹ This is the story which is commemorated in the Feast of 'St. John before the Latin Gate' set down in Western Calendars (*e.g.* in the English Prayer Book), on May 6th. See Tertullian, *De Praescr.* 36.

² *H. E.* iii. 18, 20. Dr. Lawlor has shown that this statement is to be traced to Hegesippus (*Eusebiana*, p. 51 ff.).

controversy, he appeals to the practice of several eminent Christian leaders, among them being Ἰωάννης ὁ ἐπὶ τὸ στήθος τοῦ κυρίου ἀναπεσών, ὃς ἐγενήθη ἱερεὺς τὸ πέταλον πεφορεκώς, καὶ μάρτυς καὶ διδάσκαλος· οὗτος ἐν Ἐφέσῳ κεκοίμηται,—i.e. ‘John who leant on the breast of the Lord; who became a priest wearing the πέταλον or priestly frontlet,¹ both witness (or martyr?) and teacher; he sleeps in Ephesus.’² It is not reasonable to suppose that by this ‘John who leant on the breast of the Lord,’ Polycrates meant any other than the only John known to Irenaeus, and said by Irenaeus to have ended his days in Ephesus, viz., John the son of Zebedee. We do not know what is the value of the statement here made that John became a ‘priest,’ and I do not stay now to examine the theories that have been put forward on the subject. The title, μάρτυς, as applied to John, may, however, seem to demand some further explanation, especially as Polycrates applies it in the following sentences to Polycarp and others who were (probably) ‘martyrs’ in our modern sense of the word. But the truth is that μάρτυς and its cognates are frequently used in early writings of persons who suffered in various degrees for the faith, but did not endure the extreme penalty. The passages quoted

¹ Epiphanius says the same thing of James the Just (*Haer.* xxix., lxxviii.).

² *Ap. Eus. H.E.*, v. 24.

below (pp. 268, 281) from Origen and from Gregory of Nyssa, provide typical instances.¹ And, indeed, the author of the Apocalypse speaks of himself as being in Patmos διὰ . . . τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ (Rev. i. 9). The testimony of Polycrates, at all events, is explicit as to the residence of John in Ephesus, and therefore, even if it were imagined that John ended his days by a violent death in that city, the Church's tradition as to the Gospel being written there by him in old age would not be disturbed.²

¹ So Apollonius, writing about the year 210, tells of one Themiso, who 'dared to boast as a martyr' (ὡς μάρτυς), and of one Alexander who similarly 'called himself a martyr' (ap. Euseb. *H.E.* v. 18). We have the same usage in Tertullian, e.g. 'Potes itaque te martyrem vindicare constanter ostendisse Christum' (*De Fuga*, 12), a reference which I owe to Dr. Lawlor (cf. Lightfoot's note in his *Clement*, i. 26 f.).

² A passage in Chrysostom's *Homilies* has been quoted (e.g. by Dr. Drummond, *Authorship of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 234) as indicating his belief that John suffered martyrdom. He paraphrases (*Hom.* lxxv.) Christ's words to the sons of Zebedee (Matt. xx. 23), as follows: 'Ye shall be counted as worthy of martyrdom, and shall suffer those things which I suffer; ye shall close your lives by a violent death (βιαίῳ θανάτῳ τὴν ζῶν καταλύσετε).' But in a later homily he says explicitly that John 'lived a long time after the taking of Jerusalem' (*Hom.* lxxvi.), which is quite consistent with the usual story of John's end. No doubt his words do not exclude the possibility of John's martyrdom as an old man, at Ephesus; but they quite exclude any tradition that, like his brother James, he suffered in the early days of the Church's struggle. Chrysostom is thus an undoubted witness to the tradition that John's life was a long one, and, as regards the problem of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, this is the point of consequence.

II

We now proceed to examine the two main lines of argument by which belief in the 'red martyrdom' of John has been defended, despite the general tradition which I have rehearsed. They depend, respectively, on a supposed quotation from Papias, and on the place of St. John's Day in ecclesiastical calendars.

1. *The alleged statement of Papias.* One of the MSS. of the Chronicle of George the Sinner (who wrote about the year 840) preserves a statement to the effect that Papias (who was Bishop of Hierapolis about the year 140) had asserted that John the Apostle was killed by the Jews. The words are as follows :—

[Ἰωάννης] μαρτυρίου κατηξίωται. Παπίας γὰρ ὁ Ἱεραπό-
λεως ἐπίσκοπος, αὐτόπτης τούτου γενόμενος, ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ
λόγῳ τῶν κυριακῶν λογίων φάσκει ὅτι ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων
ἀνηρέθη, πληρώσας δηλαδὴ μετὰ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τὴν τοῦ
χριστοῦ περὶ αὐτῶν πρόρρησιν; i.e., 'John has been deemed
worthy of martyrdom. For Papias, the Bishop of
Hierapolis, having been an eyewitness of him (or of it?),
says in the second book of his "Dominical Oracles," that
he was killed by Jews, having evidently fulfilled, with his
brother, the prediction of Christ concerning them'; i.e.
Matt. xx. 23 = Mark x. 39.

George goes on to say that Origen, in his commentary on St. Matthew, had corroborated this and had asserted that John μεμαρτύρηκεν. There is,

however, no corroboration. The commentary of Origen on Matthew xx. 23¹ is extant, and his explanation of the fulfilment of Christ's words is the usual one :

‘ Herod killed James, the brother of John, with the sword ; but the king of the Romans, as tradition teaches, condemned John, witnessing for the word of truth (μαρτυροῦντα διὰ τὸν τῆς ἀληθείας λόγον) to the island of Patmos. John tells us concerning his own witness (περὶ τοῦ μαρτυρίου ἑαυτοῦ).’

In this passage, then, George has certainly misreported Origen, and thus suspicion is cast upon his alleged quotation from Papias (which, be it remembered, is only found in *one* MS. of his Chronicle). Dr. Salmon declined to believe that Papias had said anything of the sort² ; while Bishop Lightfoot put forward the hypothesis that George, or his immediate source, had omitted some words which would put a quite different complexion on the sentence from Papias. Having regard to the passage in Origen, he suggested that ‘ the sentence may have run in the original somewhat in this way : Παπίας φάσκει ὅτι Ἰωάννης [μεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Ῥωμαίων βασιλέως κατεδικάσθη μαρτυρῶν εἰς Πάτμον, Ἰάκωβος δὲ] ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνῆρέθη.’³ This was highly ingenious, and, mere conjecture as it is, Harnack

¹ Lommatzsch, iv. 18.

² *Introduction to N. T.* (ed. 5), p. 296.

³ *Essays on Supernatural Religion*, p. 212.

has practically accepted the same or a similar solution of the puzzle.¹

Since Lightfoot wrote, however, a second authority has been discovered for the ascription to Papias of the statement that John was 'killed by Jews.' De Boor published in 1888, in *Texte und Untersuchungen*,² an extract supposed to be from the fifth-century chronicler Philip of Sidé, which contains the following :

Παπίας ἐν τῇ δευτέρῳ λόγῳ λέγει ὅτι Ἰωάννης ὁ θεολόγος καὶ Ἰάκωβος ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνηγρέθησαν.

Now, George the Sinner and Philip of Sidé are both untrustworthy as historians,³ but they agree so nearly in the terms of the reference which they make to the 'second book' of Papias's *Dominical Oracles*, that we can hardly refuse to believe that there was something, at all events, in Papias's work which gave rise to this misinterpretation.

I call it a misinterpretation, for it is difficult to suppose that a statement by Papias to the effect that John had suffered martyrdom could have been completely ignored by Eusebius and the ecclesiastical writers of his day. The presumption, as Lightfoot

¹ *Chronologie*, i. p. 665.

² V. 2, 170.

³ Dr. Armitage Robinson has urged that George the Sinner is not an independent authority for the tradition which we are discussing, and that the passage in his chronicle about John's martyrdom has been interpolated from Philip of Sidé (*Historical Character of St. John's Gospel*, p. 66), who is therefore the only witness to be cross-examined.

saw, is that there was some misunderstanding or misreading of a passage in Papias's work which led astray Philip of Sidé, and after him the scribe of George the Sinner. But I believe that a simpler explanation of the mistake than that put forward by Lightfoot may be suggested. Let us examine afresh the alleged extracts from Papias.

In the extract from Philip of Sidé, the phrase, 'John the theologian' cannot be a quotation from Papias, for the designation of John as *ὁ θεολόγος* did not come into use until the fourth century. And we observe that the words following *ὑπὸ 'Ιουδαίων ἀνηρέθη* in George do not purport to be a quotation, but are the words of the chronicler himself, who is anxious to bring in a reference to Matthew xx. 23 = Mark x. 39. So that we are reduced to the two phrases: [*Ἰωάννης*] *ὑπὸ 'Ιουδαίων ἀνηρέθη* and *Ἰωάννης . . καὶ Ἰάκωβος ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ 'Ιουδαίων ἀνηρέθησαν*, as giving us what may be supposed to have come from Papias.

The first thing that will occur to the reader is that the statement is certainly not true of James, the brother of John. He was not killed 'by Jews,' but by Herod (Acts xii. 2), and no other tradition as to his end ever gained currency. True, his death was due to the desire of Herod to please the Jews, but his martyrdom could not on that account be reasonably described by the phrase *ὑπὸ 'Ιουδαίων*

ἀνῆρέθη, and it never was so described by ecclesiastical writers; so that, quite apart from the statement as to John, the statement as to James shows that there must be some confusion in the extract from Philip of Sidé. Can we trace the source of this confusion? I think we can.

The Greek of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius is not extant, and we have to reconstruct it from the Armenian version and the Latin version by Jerome, with the aid of the Greek history of George Syncellus (*circa* 792) which was based upon it. Now, when Syncellus has described the beheading of James the son of Zebedee and the subsequent attack on Peter, he proceeds :

ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν περὶ τοῦ πρώτου ἐπισκόπου Ἱεροσολύμων ταῦτα νοεῖται Ἰακώβου τοῦ ἀδελφοθέου ἀντιπίπτει τῇ ἱστοροῦντι λόγῳ κατὰ τὸ ἡ ἔτος Νέρωνος ὅπερ ἦν τῆς αὐτοῦ ἐπισκοπῆς ἔτος που λ', λίθοις ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων καὶ γναφικῶ ξύλῳ ἀναιρεθῆναι ἀπὸ τοῦ πτερυγίου καταβληθέντα, ὡς καὶ αὐτὸς Εὐσέβιος ἐν τῷ κανόνι παρέθετο, εἰ δὲ περὶ ἄλλου ὕγιᾶς ὁ λόγος.¹

That is to say, Syncellus tells us that Eusebius had stated in his *Chronicle* that James, *the Lord's brother*, 'was killed by Jews,' and so we find it in the Latin version of the *Chronicle* by Jerome : 'Jacobus frater domini quem omnes Justum appellabant a Judaeis lapidibus opprimitur.' We have a similar rendering in the Armenian version.²

¹ P. 634. 1.

² See Schoene's edition of the *Chronicle*, ii. p. 154.

Thus it may be concluded that the entry in the *Chronicle* of Eusebius at this point, *s.a.* 61, was (as it is restored in Migne's text) :

ὁ ἀδελφὸς τοῦ κυρίου Ἰάκωβος ὁ ὀνομασθεὶς ὑπὸ παντῶν
δίκαιος λίθοις ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀναιρείται.

We may add that the story of the martyrdom of James the Just is given by Josephus (*Antt.* xx. 9. 1), and at length by Hegesippus as quoted by Eusebius (*H.E.* ii. 23) ; and in each case the fact that he was killed *by Jews* is specially emphasised.

We have then established the fact that the phrase, ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνῆρέθη, is used by Eusebius to describe the end of James the Just, while it would be quite inappropriate if applied to James the son of Zebedee, and is, in fact, never applied to him. Hence when we find an alleged quotation from Papias asserting that James *the son of Zebedee* ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνῆρέθη, we are at once led to the conclusion that there has been a mistake, that what Papias really wrote—as other early writers wrote—was that James *the Just* ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνῆρέθη. There has been a confusion of James the Just with James the Great.

But this is not all ; for nothing has yet been said about the martyrdom of *John*, which is the matter of interest. How, it will be asked, did *his* name come into the context of the phrase ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνῆρέθη, which was habitually used of James the Just ? The order of words in the passage from the

Chronicle of Eusebius will, I believe, supply the answer: ὁ ἀδελφὸς τοῦ κυρίου Ἰάκωβος . . . ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνηρέθη. It so happens that the order of words is 'the brother of the Lord, James,'¹ and not the more usual 'James, the brother of the Lord.' Let us write down this phrase in Greek uncials, with the usual abbreviation for κυρίου :

ΟΑΔΕΛΦΟCΤΟΥΚΥΙΑΚΩΒΟC

The confusion of only one letter, Τ with Α, by a scribe would lead to

ΟΑΔΕΛΦΟCΤΟΥΚΑΙΑΚΩΒΟC

which the next scribe would naturally write down in the form :

Ο ΑΔΕΛΦΟC ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΙΑΚΩΒΟC

Now ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἰάκωβος is not good Greek for 'his brother and James.' αὐτοῦ is always used retrospectively, of some person mentioned before, not prospectively of some one named afterwards. None the less, a reader who came upon ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ Ἰάκωβος in a manuscript of Papias would not doubt that John and James were intended, any more than an English reader who came upon the phrase 'his brother and James' would doubt that the sons of Zebedee were in the writer's mind, however awkward he might think the expression to be.

That is to say, the appearance of ὁ ἀδελφὸς αὐτοῦ

¹ This is also the order of the words in Hegesippus, as quoted by Eusebius (*H. E.* ii. 23).

καὶ Ἰάκωβος gives us the very statement of which we are in search, *viz.*, that *John and James* were killed by Jews. Not only do we thus explain the combination of the names 'John' and 'James' in the passage from Philip of Sidé, but we find the explanation of their appearing in this unusual order. 'James and John' is the ordinary way of referring to the sons of Zebedee; and the order 'John and James' would be puzzling were the explanation of it not forthcoming. All that we have to suppose, then, in order to account for the allegations of George the Sinner and Philip of Sidé, is that in some manuscript or manuscripts of the work of Papias, the reading

Ο ΑΔΕΛΦΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΙΑΚΩΒΟΣ

has taken the place of

Ο ΑΔΕΛΦΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΚΥ ΙΑΚΩΒΟΣ

of which it may so readily be a corruption. It will be observed that this does not postulate any lacuna in the text, as Lightfoot did, but merely a very simple misreading of a statement which we can prove to have been repeatedly made in the early centuries—not of James the son of Zebedee, but of James the Just.

I submit, therefore, that the idea that Papias is an authority for the 'red martyrdom' of John the son of Zebedee must be dismissed. In the light of the universal belief of the Church, it would be

very difficult to suppose that Papias gave currency to any such idea. And the only quotation from him which has been supposed to support it may quite naturally be explained as a misreading of a passage in which he had spoken of the martyrdom of James the Just, but had made no mention of John at all.

2. *The place of St. John's Day in Church Calendars* has furnished a second argument, relied on by some, to establish an early belief in the Apostle's martyrdom. It is put most succinctly by Professor Burkitt in his *Gospel History and Transmission*, p. 253 ff. We all know that the Feast of St. Stephen occurs on December 26; that of St. John on December 27; and that of the Innocents on December 28. Now, why was St. John's Feast placed here between that of the first martyr, and that of the martyred children? The answer suggested is that it is because John was also reckoned a martyr by the early Church; and appeal is made to the Calendar of Carthage drawn up about 505 A.D., where, on December 27, we have the entry, 'Commemoration of St. John Baptist, and of James the Apostle whom Herod slew.' Now, John Baptist is commemorated in the same Calendar on June 24, and therefore it is clear that John the Evangelist is here intended, so that we have the conjunction of the two sons of Zebedee on December 27, both being presumably com-

memorated for the same reason, *viz.*, their martyrdom. And, if we go to the East, we find a similar conjunction of James and John in the oldest Syriac Calendar (A.D. 411) on the same day. Hence Professor Burkitt argues that the tradition of the Calendars corroborates the statement ascribed to Papias that John and James both suffered 'red martyrdom.' I venture to think that a closer inspection of the evidence will not permit us to adopt this conclusion.

The mutual relations of the various extant Calendars and Martyrologies are extremely intricate; but they have been carefully studied by Duchesne,¹ and more recently by Achelis,² and their general conclusions may be taken as thoroughly well established. It would appear that all existing Western Calendars, including our own, go back to the so-called Hieronymian Martyrology, composed about the beginning of the sixth century, which fuses together, often very unintelligently, the *data* of both the Western and the Eastern Martyrologies current at the time. The Bollandist de Buck writes of this enormous collection, 'nullus forte in universa antiquitate horribilior liber,' and

¹ In the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum* for November 1894.

² *Die Martyrologien, ihre Geschichte und ihr Wert*; untersucht von H. Achelis (1900). An article by Dr. Feltoe on 'St. John and St. James in Western Calendars' in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. x. p. 589 f. gives much information.

a 'horrible book' it certainly is to the investigator of primitive antiquity. The entry on December 27 in this Calendar is as follows :

‘Assumptio S. Joannis evangelistae ; et Ordinatio episcopatus S. Jacobi fratris domini, qui ab apostolis primus est Judaeis Hierosolymis est episcopus ordinatus et tempore paschali martyrio coronatus.’¹

That is to say, it commemorates on December 27 the Passing of John (nothing being said of his martyrdom) and the Consecration of James the Just as Bishop of Jerusalem. There is no mention here of James the Great, his martyrdom being commemorated, as it still is with us, on July 25. The Consecration of James the Just was at a very early period reckoned an important date, and we have it noted under the year 34 in the *Chronicle* of Eusebius Ἰάκωβος ὁ ἀδελφόμενος πρῶτος ἐπίσκοπος Ἱεροσολύμων ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καθίσταται.²

Now it might be thought from this, at first sight, that the entries in the Calendar of Carthage, and in the old Syriac Martyrology, already cited, are due

¹ This is the direct source of the entries in the various Celtic Martyrologies, *e.g.* those of Oengus, Tamlaght, Gorman and the Drummond Missal, all of which go back, as does that of Bede, to the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*. The Martyrology of Tamlaght has ‘Assumptio, et Ordinatio Jacobi Apostoli fratris Iohannis,’ an entry showing how easy it was (1) to confuse James the son of Zebedee with James the Less, and (2) to ascribe to one of the sons of Zebedee something that was only true, and was originally intended to be said, of the other.

² Cf. Georg. Syncell, 620. 4.

to that confusion between the two Apostles called James, to which we have already traced a misunderstanding of Papias. And undoubtedly the confusion occurs over and over again in the later Martyrologies. But this would not be a just inference, as will be seen if we look into the *sources* of the Martyrologium Hieronymianum.

The earliest of *Western* martyrologies extant, the *Depositio Martyrum*¹ of the Roman Church, compiled in 354, gives us no information available for our present inquiry. The next in date is the Calendar of Carthage, already mentioned, which has :

Dec. 26. S. Stephani primi martyris.

Dec. 27. S. Johannis Baptistae et Jacobi Apostoli quem Herodes occidit.

Dec. 28. Sanctorum Infantum quos Herodes occidit.

The date of this is 505 A.D. ; and we need not seek out later Western examples.

We now turn to the *East*, and we find that about 360 a martyrology was formed at Nicomedia, of which we have a copy in Syriac, made in 411.² This has the entries :

Dec. 26. Stephen, chief martyr, etc.

Dec. 27. John and James, the Apostles, at Jerusalem.

¹ Both this, and the Calendar of Carthage, are accessible in Ruinart's *Acta Sincera* (ed. 1689), pp. 692, 693, or in Lietzmann's *The Three Oldest Martyrologies* (Cambridge, 1904).

² Printed by Wright in the *Journal of Sacred Literature* for 1866. Duchesne claims to have shown that this is merely an abridgment of a Greek Menology of Asia Minor.

Dec. 28. In the City of Rome, Paul the Apostle and Simon Cephas, the chief of the Apostles of the Lord.

It is to be observed that this Syriac martyrology contains no other Scriptural saints, the remaining entries throughout the year being those of local martyrs.

There is a trace of a similar commemoration in a passage of the treatise, *De Persecutione* (§ 23), written by Aphrahat, 'the Persian sage,' in 344. I quote from Dr. Gwynn's translation : ¹

'After Him (*sc.* Christ) was the faithful martyr Stephen whom the Jews stoned.

'Simon also and Paul were perfect martyrs. And James and John walked in the footsteps of their Master Christ.'

It will be observed that Aphrahat does not speak of James and John as 'martyrs.'

'Also (others) of the Apostles thereafter in divers places confessed and proved themselves true martyrs.'

The selection of Peter and Paul, James and John, for special notice in this way can hardly be due to accident, and the question arises on what principle these great leaders of the Church ² were com-

¹ *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. xiii., p. 401.

² These five leaders, Peter, Paul, James, John, and Stephen are in like manner specially mentioned in a panegyric by St. Gregory Nazianzene upon St. Basil the Great (about the year 382). But it is not suggested that their pre-eminence is due to the fact that they died as martyrs.

memorated in the East immediately after St. Stephen and the Feast of the Nativity.¹ Were they commemorated *as martyrs*, as men who had suffered death for the name of Christ? That is the real point. It is clear from these various witnesses, both Eastern and Western, that James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were commemorated together shortly after Christmas. But it is not clear without proof that they were thus honoured because they had suffered 'red martyrdom' and for this reason alone.

In point of fact, we can show that a quite different reason was assigned by the only early writer who has fully discussed the matter. The writer is St. Gregory of Nyssa. In an *éloge*,² of St. Basil, preached at the Cappadocian Caesarea, he tells that it was customary after Christmas to celebrate the feasts of Stephen, Peter, James, John, Paul; and in an earlier 'Laudatio S. Stephani,'³ he explains the principle on which these names were arranged. The praise of the proto-martyr is, he says, fitly followed by a commemoration of Apostles, 'for neither are martyrs without apostles, nor are

¹ Similarly in the Armenian Calendar we have: Dec. 26, St. Stephen; Dec. 27, St. Peter and St. Paul; Dec. 28, St. James and St. John. (See Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, Engl. tr., p. 266).

² Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, xlv. col. 789. This sermon, but not the next mentioned, is referred to by Duchesne, *Christian Worship*, Engl. tr., p. 265B.

³ Migne, *Patr. Gr.*, xlv. col. 725.

apostles separated from them': οὐτε τοίνυν μάρτυρες ἄνευ ἀποστόλων οὐτε πάλιν ἀποστολὸι χωρὶς ἐκείνων. And then he proceeds :

‘To this Stephen all the precious stones (*sc.* of the spiritual temple) were immediately joined together—the most divine heralds of the Gospels; after them the martyrs; and after them again those who have shone with saving virtue—principally those commemorated at this present season who flash forth the beauty of piety far and brightly, I mean Peter and James and John, the leaders of the apostolic harmony, and the crowns of the Church’s glory.’¹

It is quite plain from this that Gregory did not suppose Peter and James and John to be commemorated *qua* martyrs, but as ‘leaders of the apostolic chorus.’ They were not, he proceeds, a *lamp* (λύχνος) like John the Baptist, but *lights* (φωστῆρες) to illuminate the world. But, he adds, ‘those who to-day are honoured for their witness to Christ (*sc.* Peter, James, and John) endured the combat with different kinds of martyrdom,’² Peter being crucified, James beheaded, and John’s

¹ τῷ Στεφάνῳ δὲ τούτῳ πάντες ἐξαίφνης οἱ τιμίοι λίθοι συνεπλάκυσαν, οἱ θειοτάτοι τῶν εὐαγγελίων κήρυκες, μεθ’ οὓς οἱ μάρτυρες, καὶ μετ’ αὐτοὺς πάλιν οἱ σωτηρίῳ ἀρετῇ διαλάμπσαντες, προηγουμένως δὲ οἱ ἐπὶ τοῦ παρόντος μνημονευόμενοι πολὺ καὶ λαμπρὸν ἀπαστράπτουντες τὸ κάλλος τῆς εὐσεβείας, λέγω δὴ Πέτρος καὶ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωάννης οἱ καὶ τῆς ἀποστολικῆς ἁρμονίας ἐξάρχοντες καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς εὐδοξίας στεφάνοι.

² οἱ σήμερον ταῖς ὑπὲρ χριστοῦ μαρτυρίαις σεμνυνόμενοι . . . διαφόροις δὲ τοῦ μαρτυρίου τρόποις ἐναθλήσαντες. The ambiguity of the word μαρτύριον is impossible to reproduce in English.

witness being fulfilled, first in his trial when flung into the cauldron of boiling oil,¹ and secondly, in his continual willingness to die for the name of Christ.

We find, then, that Gregory, writing at an earlier date than that of any of the extant Calendars, while he entirely confirms their record that James and John were commemorated together after Christmas, puts out of court the explanation that they were thus commemorated *as martyrs*.² They were honoured as the leaders of the Apostles, and not as 'martyrs' (of whom there were many, but who had a lower rank than that of apostles), although in their several ways they witnessed for their Master, James by 'red martyrdom,' but John by 'white.' If, therefore, the testimony of the Calendars be appealed to, they tell us indeed that there was a primitive Feast of SS. James and John on December 27, but the explanation is found in the collocation with them of St. Peter at a date prior to our earliest Calendar. The familiar idea that John was a 'martyr' in will, although not in deed, goes back to St. Gregory of Nyssa, who is careful to distinguish the commemorations of 'martyrs' from those of 'apostles.' And it is in the latter capacity that St. John was honoured in

¹ See above, p. 264.

² This reasoning has been accepted by Dr. Armitage Robinson (*Historical Character of St. John's Gospel*, p. 71 ff), and by Dr. Harnack (*Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1909, p. 10).

the Eastern Church, on the earliest occasion when his feast is mentioned.

The argument for John's martyrdom which is derived from Calendars thus breaks down, when the evidence is sifted, just as completely as the argument based on the misapplied quotation from Papias. It may be said, I believe, that for reasonable suspicion that John the son of Zebedee came to a violent end there is no ground whatever, and that this idea, at any rate, cannot be permitted to supply serious argument against his authorship of the Fourth Gospel.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER XI

Another argument in favour of the view that St. John the Apostle died a martyr's death has recently been based on a statement quoted by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* iv. 9) from the commentary of Heracleon on Luke xii. 8 ff. This statement, it is said (*e.g.* by Mr. H. L. Jackson in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, Oct. 1916, p. 30) 'expressly mentions some who had *not* sealed their fate with their deaths: ἐξ ὧν Ματθαῖος, Φίλιππος, Θῶμας, Λεὺϊς καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί. The point is the explicit denial of martyrdom in a context from which the name of the Apostle John is absent—he is, surely, not relegated to the "many others"—and that Clement, it would appear, raises no demur.'

A careful study of Heracleon's argument will, I think, show that Mr. Jackson's argument is without substance. Heracleon is combating the extravagant claims sometimes made on behalf of 'confessors.' He says that of 'confession' there are two kinds—that which is made with the

voice before the magistrate, and that which exhibits itself in the life and conversation of a quiet Christian man. It is not the case that all the saved have made confession with their voice and have departed; it is not true, for instance, of Matthew, Philip, Thomas, Levi (Lebbaeus), and many others. οὐ γὰρ πάντες οἱ σωζόμενοι ὁμολόγησαν τὴν διὰ τῆς φωνῆς ὁμολογίαν καὶ ἐξῆλθον. The contrast which Heracleon institutes is between those who make confession of their faith publicly before the civil magistrate, and those who have never been called to do so. Now in the latter category no one could include the Apostle John. He was exiled to Patmos διὰ . . . τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ (Rev. i. 9), and in addition there is the well-known story of his being plunged into a cauldron of boiling oil. Whether he died a martyr's death or no, he was certainly counted among those who bore public testimony to their faith, and made their confession διὰ τῆς φωνῆς. He was not of those who made their confession *only* in the quiet ways of an undisturbed life. And, therefore, Heracleon could not have introduced him as an example of his second class of confessors.

It is interesting to find that in Heracleon's time the tradition prevailed that Matthew, Philip, and Thomas were not 'confessors with the voice,' for the later apocryphal *Acta* of these Apostles tell of a violent death, after public confession of their faith, for each of them. The Acts of Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus, on the other hand, confirm Heracleon, for they represent the Apostle in question as dying peacefully among his disciples.¹ But whatever substance there was in Heracleon's tradition the example of St. John would not have served his argument on any view of the Apostle's end.

¹ In the summaries on the twelve Apostles, ascribed to Hippolytus, Matthew and Lebbaeus are given a peaceful end, but Philip and Thomas meet their death as martyrs.

CHAPTER XII

BISHOPS AND PRESBYTERS IN THE EPISTLE OF CLEMENT OF ROME

It seems to be generally believed that the terms *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* are applied in the letter of St. Clement of Rome indiscriminately to the same persons, and the assumption that this is the case underlies a good many of the arguments against any distinction, between presbyters who were bishops, and presbyters who were not bishops, having been recognised in the apostolic age. The subject of the origins of the Christian ministry is one of such great interest and importance, and at the same time of such obscurity, that a fresh examination of one little corner of the field of evidence is perhaps excusable, well trodden as the ground is. I desire to confine myself now strictly to one question, viz., the nature of the evidence afforded by the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians as to the usage of the terms *ἐπίσκοπος* and *πρεσβύτερος* at Corinth during the last decade of the first century. Leaving on one side all other evidence, I ask whether the language of this Epistle would suggest that the *denotation* (as the logicians

say) of the terms was coextensive in the year 97 A.D. Does Clement contemplate a state of things at Corinth in which all presbyters were bishops and all bishops were presbyters? Or does his letter suggest that the ἐπίσκοποι were a class of officials distinct from the general body of πρεσβύτεροι, in the mind of his correspondents? I put the question in this way, because it seems to me (whether rightly or wrongly) that critics have been too apt to interpret Clement's language in the light of their preconceived conclusions as to the history of the development of the episcopate. They have in many cases approached the Epistle with the conviction that during the first century the office of ἐπίσκοπος was not conceived as distinct from the office of πρεσβύτερος; and they have thus been led to pass over the indications which seem—to me at least—to suggest a different conclusion. At any rate, I propose to examine Clement's letter afresh, leaving aside for the moment all the other available evidence. That would afford material for a much larger essay.

What was Clement's object in writing to the Church of Corinth? The letter was, we know, called forth by a schism which had appeared among the Christians in that city. But what was the nature of the schism? That is the problem to which we must address ourselves in the first instance.

i. The schism was originated and fostered by a few men only : it was a detestable and unholy sedition ἡν ὀλίγα πρόσωπα προπετεῇ καὶ αὐθάδῃ ὑπάρχοντα . . . ἐξέκαυσαν (§1). It was got up 'for the sake of one or two persons,' δι' ἐν ἡ δύο πρόσωπα (§ 47).

ii. The cause of the sedition or schism was *jealousy*. This comes out again and again. In § 3 ζῆλος καὶ φθόνος are deprecated ; examples of jealousy are given as a warning, such as Cain, Esau, Joseph's brethren, the opponents of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and of David (§ 4), the persecutors of the Apostles (§ 5), and of holy women (§ 6). The Corinthian Christians are bidden to root out this jealousy (§§ 9, 63), and to be jealous instead for the things that pertain to salvation (§ 45). And the point of the appeal (to which we shall again return) in § 43 is that as Dathan and Abiram (cf. also § 4) were jealous of the prerogatives of the sons of Levi (Numb. xvi.), so also were the leaders of the sedition at Corinth actuated by jealousy of others.

iii. The sedition was directed against the πρεσβύτεροι : στασιάζειν πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους is the phrase used (§ 47). See also § 3. In some sort, the course adopted had been derogatory to the presbyters, for Clement observes (§ 44) : 'Happy are those presbyters who have gone before, seeing that

their departure was fruitful and ripe, for they have no fear lest any one should remove them from their appointed office' (τόπος). The revolt was an invasion of presbyteral authority, and the ring-leaders are bidden to submit themselves to the *presbyters* in repentance: ὑμεῖς οὖν, οἱ τὴν καταβολὴν τῆς στάσεως ποιήσαντες, ὑποτάγητε τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις (§ 57). They are entreated to give way, that the flock of Christ may be at peace with its duly appointed presbyters, μετὰ τῶν καθεσταμένων πρεσβυτέρων (§ 54).

iv. It is apparent, then, that one or two men desired through jealousy and envy to grasp a station of dignity which was not theirs by lawful appointment, and that this action of theirs was really a revolt against the authority of the presbyters. They are told by Clement: 'It is better for you to be found little in the flock of Christ and to be of good repute (ἐλλογίμους) than to be had in exceeding honour and yet be cast out from the hope of Him' (§ 57).

v. The climax of the revolt is thus described by Clement: ὁρῶμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐνίοις ὑμεῖς μετηγάγετε καλῶς πολιτευομένους ἐκ τῆς ἀμέμπτως αὐτοῖς τετηρημένης¹ λειτουργίας (§ 44), viz.: 'For we see that ye displaced some men, though they were living honourably, from the service which had been blamelessly

¹ This is Lightfoot's emendation of the MS. τετιμημένης.

discharged by them.' Now the question before us is this: Who were the men thus displaced? Were they members of the general presbyteral body, thrust out to make room for the jealous intruders who had no claim except that they were faction leaders? And was this the invasion of presbyteral authority of which the schismatics were guilty? To answer this question we must scrutinise with care the words actually used. The men who were 'displaced' had discharged an office which is described as one of *λειτουργία*. Is this only a general term, or is it descriptive of any special kind of service? In particular, does it stand for a service in which presbyters took part?

vi. The answer is not doubtful. *λειτουργία* is never once applied in the Epistle to the actions discharged by men called *πρεσβυτέροι*. It is habitually applied to the service of those who held the office of *ἐπισκοπή*, or of those who were (in Clement's thought) their precursors and types under the Old Covenant. This will appear the more clearly if the argument of §§ 37-47 be analysed.

vii. Subordination of offices, Clement urges, is God's appointment. We are members of One Body (§ 37). Each man has his proper function and gift, not that of another man (§ 38). We ought to do all things in order. In particular, God commanded 'that offerings and services be performed

carefully,' τὰς προσφορὰς καὶ λειτουργίας ἐπιμελῶς ἐπιτελεῖσθαι (§ 40). They should be performed at the proper times and by the proper persons. So under the Old Covenant, τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ ἴδιαι λειτουργίαι δεδομέναι εἰσίν, καὶ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἴδιος ὁ τόπος προστέτακται, καὶ λευῖταις ἴδιαι διακονίαι ἐπὶκείνται· ὁ λαϊκὸς ἄνθρωπος τοῖς λαϊκοῖς προστάγμασιν δέδεται, *i.e.* 'To the high priest his proper services have been assigned, and to the priests their proper place has been appointed, and upon the Levites their proper ministrations are laid. The layman is bound by the layman's ordinances' (§ 40). In other words λειτουργία was the special service of the high priest;¹ the offering was made διὰ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως καὶ τῶν προειρημένων λειτουργῶν (§41). Death was the penalty for breaking this law (cf. Num. xviii. 7). So it is too under the New Covenant. God sent Christ; Christ sent the Apostles; the Apostles 'appointed their firstfruits to be bishops and deacons unto them that should believe,' as the prophet had foretold: καθίστανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι, εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν (§ 42; cf. Isa. lx. 17). Is it thought strange that such provision should be made for the future worship of the Church? Let us remember that Moses made a similar ordinance when

¹ Thus, the ministration of Zacharias in the Temple was a λειτουργία (Luke i. 23); cf. Hebr. viii. 6, ix. 21.

jealousy provoked Dathan and Abiram to stir up sedition against him (cf. § 4), and to claim priestly prerogatives to which they had no right. But Moses, that such disorder might never arise again, provided that the high-priestly office should always remain with Aaron's family, and he obtained the people's assent thereto (§ 43 ; cf. Num. xvi., xvii.). Now the Apostles knew that there would be strife over the ἐπισκοπή just as Moses knew that there would be strife over the ἱερωσύνη: and so the Apostles appointed 'the aforesaid persons [*i.e.* ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διακόνου] and afterwards they gave a further injunction [reading ἐπινομήν] that if they should fall asleep, other approved men (δεδοκιμασμένοι) should succeed to their service (λειτουργία). Those, therefore, who were appointed by them or afterwards by other men of good repute (ἐλλογίμων) with the consent of the whole Church [this corresponding to the assent of the whole people of Israel in the case of Aaron's priesthood], and who have served (λειτουργήσαντας) the flock of Christ blamelessly, . . . these men we consider to have been unjustly thrust out from the service (λειτουργία). For it will be no light sin if we thrust out from the episcopate those who have offered the gifts blamelessly and holily (ἐὰν τοὺς ἀμέμπτως καὶ ὁσίως προσευγκόντας τὰ δῶρα τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς ἀποβάλωμεν). Happy are those presbyters who have gone before

seeing that their departure is fruitful and ripe ; for they have no fear lest any should remove them from their appointed station (τόπος). For we see that ye (ὁμεῖς, with emphasis) have displaced some men living honourably from the ministration (λειτουργία) blamelessly discharged by them ' (§ 44). This was to invade the τόπος of the presbyterate, to whom alone it belonged to choose certain members of their body to discharge the λειτουργία of an ἐπίσκοπος.

viii. This long analysis of Clement's reasoning may serve to bring out the parallel he urges between Moses' action in perpetuating the priesthood in Aaron's family, and the Apostles' action in providing for due succession of ἐπίσκοποι. Further, the sedition raging at Corinth was strictly parallel to the sedition of Dathan and Abiram. Both were inspired by jealousy (§ 4); both are conceived as directed—not against Aaron in the one case and the ἐπίσκοποι in the other (although the result of Dathan's schism, if successful, would have been to depose Aaron, as in the Corinthian schism some ἐπίσκοποι were deposed), but—in the one case against Moses (§ 4), with whom were associated the Israelitish presbyters (Num. xvi. 25), and in the other case against the Corinthian presbyters. Yet again the service of Aaron was a λειτουργία; so was the service of the ἐπίσκοποι. That term is not

used by Clement of the work of the presbyters either under the Old or the New Covenant.

ix. When the office of a presbyter is spoken of in the Epistle, the word used is the general term *τόπος*.¹ This is significant only because of the careful avoidance of the term *λειτουργία*, which is applied all through to the service of worship performed by the *ἐπίσκοπος* or his precursors (in Clement's view) under the Old Covenant.² *Λειτουργία* is the word employed in Numbers xvi., xvii. of the service of the sanctuary performed by the priests and Levites. So we have it in § 32, § 40 (twice), § 43; and then in § 44 it is applied to the corresponding work of the *ἐπίσκοποι* (four times). It could not be applied by Clement to the office of the presbyters any more than it could be applied to the office of Moses or the Israelitish presbyters against whom Dathan's rebellion was directed. We miss the whole point of Clement's argument if

¹ In the letter of the Churches of Vienne (Eus. *H.E.* v. 4), it is said of Irenaeus, 'a presbyter': 'For if we thought that place (*τόπος*) could confer righteousness on any one, we should commend him among the first as a presbyter of the Church.' But the term is a quite general one, and is applied to the *ἐπισκοπή* in the Apostolic Constitutions. Cf. Acts i. 25, *τὸν τόπον τῆς διακονίας*, and 1 Cor. xiv. 16, *τὸν τόπον τοῦ ἰδιώτου*.

² It is indeed used sometimes (§§ 8, 9, 20, 34, 41) in a more general sense; but there can be no doubt that Clement uses it of the *ἐπίσκοποι* in §§ 37-47 in a special sense corresponding to the special sense in which it is employed of priests and Levites throughout the Old Testament.

we do not see that just as Moses corresponds in his thought to the Apostles, and Aaron to the first ἐπίσκοποι, so the πρεσβύτεροι of the Christian Church correspond, so far as rule is concerned, to the successors of Moses and the ἐπίσκοποι to the successors of Aaron. It is the office of the ἐπίσκοποι 'to offer the gifts,' i.e. the gifts of Eucharistic worship (προσφέρειν τὰ δῶρα, § 44); it is the office of the πρεσβύτεροι to choose the ἐπίσκοποι (§ 44), and generally, to exercise functions of rule (cf. §§ 21, 54, 57).¹

x. We may now return to the question stated above in § v. The state of things at Corinth seems to have been as follows. The presbyters there, as in the early Christian communities generally, occupied a position of authority, similar in many respects to that of the Jewish presbyters under the Old Covenant. These presbyters in the second Christian generation and those which followed it were entrusted with the duty proper to the Apostles in the earliest period, of appointing certain persons to the (quite distinct) office of ἐπίσκοπος, a principal part of the episcopal office being the superintendence

¹ It will be observed that the ἐπίσκοποι are twice described as 'approved' men (δεδοκιμασμένοι), approved, that is, by those to whom their selection is entrusted (§§ 42, 44); these latter are ἐλλόγιμοι, men of repute, whose names are on God's roll (§§ 44, 58). ἐλλόγιμος is used again in § 57 as descriptive of the character which the faction leaders should content themselves with.

of worship. The ἐπίσκοποι were selected from the πρεσβύτεροι, and were themselves πρεσβύτεροι; but a special ministration, that of worship, had been assigned to them. At Corinth one or two unruly faction mongers had succeeded (not without the co-operation of the Church at large; see ὑμεῖς § 44) in displacing some ἐπίσκοποι from their λειτουργία. The motive of their action was jealousy of the peculiar prerogative as to the conduct of worship attaching to the episcopal office, just as the motive of Dathan and Abiram was jealousy of Aaron's family. But exactly as Dathan's sedition was in fact a rebellion against the authority of Moses and the elders (Num. xvi. 13), so this revolt at Corinth was a revolt against the authority of the presbyters. Only those who could appoint to the episcopate had the right to depose from it; and for other members of the Church to assume to themselves the power of deposition was an invasion of the status of the presbyterate (τόπος, § 44). The presbyters who had died were 'happy,' for no one could now treat *them* with such indignity (§ 44).

xi. I maintain, then, that the whole tenor of Clement's argument no less than his careful choice of words compels us to recognise a distinction between the πρεσβύτεροι and the ἐπίσκοποι at Corinth in the year 97 A.D. That there were several ἐπίσκοποι is plain; the monarchical episco-

pate had not yet established itself there any more than it had a few years earlier at Philippi (Phil. i. 1). But that the ἐπίσκοποι as ministers of worship are distinguished as a kind of inner circle from the πρεσβύτεροι who were all ministers of rule, the argument of Clement's Epistle seems almost necessarily to require. Otherwise his long-drawn parallel between the rebellion of Dathan and the rebellion at Corinth is without point. I believe that the rest of the evidence points in the same direction ; but I am only concerned here with the Epistle of St. Clement of Rome.

ADDITIONAL NOTE TO CHAPTER XII

The evidence afforded by the apocryphal work known as the *Ascension of Isaiah* for the relation between bishops and presbyters is so apposite to the testimony of Clement, and has been so little appreciated, that I set down the facts briefly here. In the *Ascension of Isaiah* (iii. 22-24, 29, ed. Charles) the following sentences appear in a passage which purports to be a prophecy of the Christian Church. 'There will be much contention on the eve of His advent and His approach. And in those days many will love office, though devoid of wisdom. And there will be many lawless elders (πρεσβύτεροι) and shepherds (ποιμένες) dealing wrongly with their own sheep, and they will ravage them owing to their not having holy shepherds. . . . And there will be great hatred in the shepherds and elders towards each other. For there will be great jealousy (ζήλος) in the last days.' This part of the

Ascension of Isaiah is dated by Dr. Charles between 88 and 100 A.D., and it is certainly prior to 150 A.D.

It will be observed that only two orders of the Christian ministry are named (there is no mention of deacons throughout the book); that they are called ποιμένες or pastors and πρεσβύτεροι or presbyters; and that contentions which were caused by jealousy had arisen between them at the time of which the pseudo-prophet writes, that is, the end of the first century. This is exactly the reason assigned by Clement for the quarrels that he deprecated at Corinth; jealousy of the ἐπίσκοποι, and of the special duties which they discharged, was the cause of the trouble.

CHAPTER XIII

PROPHETS AND PROPHECY IN NEW TESTAMENT TIMES

AMONG the Hebrews of the monarchy the prophet occupied a position which has no exact analogue among the other great nations of antiquity, and of which it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance. In the Jewish commonwealth the distinction between the religious and the secular, between Church and State, was not recognised; and so the prophets who proclaimed the will and purposes of Jehovah to His people played a conspicuous part in the foreign and domestic policy of the nation. The great figures among those who held the prophetic office appear among the king's ministers and advisers, or—where they are in conflict with the reigning sovereign—they take their place as the natural leaders of the people.¹ The 'schools of the prophets' corresponded to our modern universities or theological colleges, and among the historians who recorded the narrative of the rise and fall of Israel, prophets take a promi-

¹ 1 Kings xix. 15 ff.

ment place.¹ In statecraft and in literature the great names are those of prophets. But the state was a theocracy, and the Hebrew literature essentially religious ; law and history no less so than the literature of philosophy, ritual, or devotion. The ‘ prophetical narrative ’ is the oldest collection of Hebrew annals which has come down to us. The Psalms breathe the prophetic spirit in every page. But the prophet was more than annalist or statesman or hymn-writer. He was the revealer of God’s purposes and the exponent of His laws. Above all else, he was a preacher of righteousness. And, inasmuch as his title to be heard and obeyed rested on his claim to a direct inspiration from Jehovah, it was entirely independent of official appointment or of caste privilege or of kingly favour. ‘ The word of the Lord came to me, saying— ’ that was his sole and sufficient commission. In this, his position was in sharp contrast, on the one hand, with that of a mere statesman like Ahitophel, or, on the other, with that of the priests who necessarily belonged to a particular family, and for whom strict rules were laid down as to the conduct of their duties. He might, indeed, lead forth the people to battle, as did Samuel, or he might be a statesman, as was Isaiah, or a priest, like Jeremiah ; but the prophetical calling had no more necessary connexion with

¹ 1 Chron. xxix. 29 ; 2 Chron. ix. 29, etc.

the priestly office than it had with the position of commander-in-chief. On occasion, the prophet might direct the course of a campaign, or, on occasion, he might offer sacrifice. No man dare gainsay him, for the spirit of Jehovah rested upon and inspired him. But the genuine prophet was never a mere official personage, and under ordinary circumstances he would not assume the duties which fell to others to discharge, and for which they had been trained and were specially qualified.

It does not need any prolonged reflection to understand that a calling such as this was unlikely to be looked upon with favour by the official classes of the nation ; and in course of time, as the simplicity of the Hebrew religion began to be overlaid by minute observances of ritual and by elaborate commentaries on the inspired law, the influence of the prophets of Israel began to wane. Not only is Malachi the last of the prophets whose writings were included in the canon, but we hear little of them after the return from the Captivity and the establishment of the Roman sway. The Maccabaeon age did not produce prophets, although the need of a ' faithful prophet ' who should lead the people was keenly felt.¹ The rabbis took their place as the teachers, the scribes as the annalists, of the nation ; and by the time of our Lord the priests

¹ 1 Macc. iv. 46 ; ix. 27 ; xiv. 41.

had gained such a measure of ascendancy in ecclesiastical matters that a prophet who attempted to interfere with their methods of discharging their sacred office would have been treated with scorn, if not with legal penalties. The prophetic calling was in abeyance in the days of the Herods.

Yet the idea of the sanctity of a prophet's mission had never quite died out among the Jewish race ; and the extraordinary influence which the preaching of John the Baptist exercised over the minds of the people was entirely in accordance with their historic traditions. 'There went out unto him all the country of Judaea and all they of Jerusalem.'¹ Like his great predecessor, Elijah, he did not scruple to denounce the sins of those in high station, and he suffered at the hands of Herod for his bold and uncompromising words of righteousness.² Like many another prophet, he was a martyr to his message ;³ Jerusalem had the unhappy reputation of a city that killed the prophets.⁴ They could not live in that close atmosphere of ecclesiasticism.

But John the Baptist had achieved more than a temporary success as a popular mission-preacher. He had revived the idea, long dormant, that the prophet rather than the priest was the true revealer

¹ Mark i. 5.

² Matt. xiv. 3, 4.

³ Luke xi. 47.

⁴ Matt. xxiii. 37.

of God's will and purpose ; and he had assured his hearers that One stronger than he¹ was coming after him to whom they must listen. And so when One arose in Galilee, 'preaching the gospel of God,'² men were prepared to listen, and it was not long before they were constrained to confess that 'a great Prophet is arisen among us, and that God has visited His people.'³ At His entry into Jerusalem the answer of the multitudes to the question, 'Who is this?' was 'This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.'⁴ We must not permit ourselves to forget that it was Jesus the Prophet of Galilee who won the allegiance and the love of those who became disciples of the Christ, for, in truth, the consummation of the prophetic office in His person was one of the beliefs most firmly impressed upon the mind of the apostolic age. Peter and Stephen both appeal to the forecast of the Deuteronomic law, 'A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren like unto Me,' as fulfilled in him whom they adored as more than a prophet.⁵ And the Christ Himself had promised that prophets should appear after His Ascension: 'Behold I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes.'⁶

¹ Mark i. 7.² Mark i. 14.³ Luke vii. 16.⁴ Matt. xxi. 11.⁵ Deut. xviii. 15 = Acts iii. 22 ; vii. 37.⁶ Matt. xxiii. 34 ; cf. Luke xi. 49.

This was one of the leading thoughts of the first Judæan Christians. The prophetic office had been revived with a majesty and a power of which their forefathers had not dreamed. 'Ye are the sons of the prophets,' Peter said to the people at Solomon's porch.¹ The idea of the Christ as King did not conflict with national sentiment, but their hopes as to the manner of His kingship had been rudely disturbed; and so it was not till after some little time had passed that the Church began to emphasise that aspect of His person, from a more spiritual point of view than that which could be occupied by men who were eagerly looking for the overthrow of the Roman power and the re-establishment of an independent national life. Again, the conception of the Christ as Priest, though of the deepest importance for a true understanding of the salvation which He wrought and the graces which He bestowed, was not prominently before them at the first. Throughout His whole ministry He had been, to all appearance, directly opposed to the priests, and it was their machinations which brought Him to the Cross. Nor was the priestly office of Messiah at all as definitely foreshadowed and portrayed in the sacred books of the Old Testament as His other titles of King and Prophet. It is not until we reach the Epistle

¹ Acts iii. 25.

to the Hebrews that this great Christian idea is unfolded and explained. It was Jesus the Prophet who mastered the Galilean peasants; and that this Jesus was the Christ, the servant of Jehovah,¹ of whom the ancient Scriptures had spoken, was the main thought of the first preachers of Christianity. In Him the prophetical calling had reached its highest; by Him it had been demonstrated, as never before, that priests are not the sole ministers of divine grace, but that the prophet whom they despise and persecute may be more truly God's messenger than they.

The inevitable effect of this Christology was a recrudescence of the prophetical calling. The first followers of the Christ had not ceased to be Jews, and yet they had ceased to have any confidence in the accredited ecclesiastical authorities of the nation. It was a thing entirely natural that they should find in a revival of one of the most ancient and sacred of their national callings that source of authoritative teaching which is essential to the life of any religious community. Their attachment to Jewish habits and institutions is apparent on every page of the early chapters of the Acts. They did not abandon the Temple services, and they still observed the hours of prayer;² it was only after a sharp struggle with themselves that they

¹ Cf. Acts iii. 13, 26.

² Acts iii. 1.

could concede that the initiatory rite of circumcision was not essential for Church membership ; they took over the ancient office of presbyter or elder from the system of the synagogue. And so, too, did they hail with thankfulness the revival of the office of the prophet. The gift of prophecy was now, as of old, the free gift of the Spirit ; ¹ not a gift in which all men shared, but a gift by the exercise of which all the faithful might be advantaged.² In one isolated instance the gift seems to have been shared in by women.³ Paul ranks *prophets* immediately after *apostles* and before *teachers* ⁴ and he holds that the Church is actually built upon the foundation of the 'apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.'⁵ The 'mystery of Christ'—that His gospel was to be catholic, for Gentile as for Jew—was 'revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.'⁶

The Christian prophets, then, like the Jewish prophets, were men whose words of exhortation were received as God's message. Like the Jewish prophets, prediction was sometimes a characteristic of their utterances, as in the case of Agabus,⁷ although neither under the law nor the gospel was

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 10.

² 1 Cor. xiv. 4.

³ Acts xxi. 9.

⁴ 1 Cor. xii. 28.

⁵ Eph. ii. 20.

⁶ Eph. iii. 5.

⁷ Acts xi. 27, 28 ; xxi. 10, 11.

this the most important or conspicuous part of the prophetic function. Elijah was counted one of the greatest of the prophets; yet no Messianic prediction is ascribed to him. And so in apostolic days prediction was not the main characteristic of the message of the *προφήτης*. They were, however, something more than *teachers*; there is a wide difference between a man who is master of his message and a man whose message is master of him. Certainly 'the spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets';¹ their utterances were not mere rhapsodies or expressions of frenzied ecstasy, like the utterances of heathen oracles. But they were inspired by a spirit not altogether their own, and their words were greater than they knew.

We meet with them several times in the Acts. Prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch with the view of gaining sympathy and relief for the poorer Judæan Christians during the time of the impending famine;² here they seemed to have played much the same part that is performed in our day by an eloquent preacher who is intrusted with the delivery of a 'charity' sermon. A little later among the prophets and teachers at Antioch five are named—Barnabas, Symeon Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, and Saul³—from among whom Barnabas and Saul were selected for a special

¹ 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

² Acts xi. 27-29.

³ Acts xiii. 1.

apostolic embassy.¹ Again, Judas Barsabbas and Silas, who were sent from Jerusalem to Antioch to convey to the Church there the decision of the apostolic council as to the terms on which Gentiles might be admitted to membership, were prophets.² Their function in virtue of their office was evidently to persuade and to preach: 'Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words and confirmed them.'

Once more, in the Apocalypse we find that prophets occupy a prominent place in the writer's vision of the Church. The second 'beast,' Satan's coadjutor, with the horns of a lamb and the voice of a dragon, who works signs and lying wonders, is described as pre-eminently 'the False Prophet.'³ And in this Judaeo-Christian book there is no mention of 'bishops' or 'deacons,' nor of 'presbyters,' save the four and twenty who are before the throne;⁴ but 'apostles' and 'prophets' are bidden to rejoice with the 'saints.'⁵ It is the blood of 'saints' and of 'prophets' that is avenged at last⁶ when reward is to be given to 'thy servants the prophets and to the saints.'⁷ As 'the saints' is the regular expression for the faithful in Christ (as

¹ Cf. Acts xiv. 4.

³ Rev. xiii. 11-14; xvi. 13, etc.

⁴ Rev. iv. 4.

⁶ Rev. xvi. 6; xviii. 24.

² Acts xv. 32.

⁵ Rev. xviii. 20.

⁷ Rev. xi. 18.

in Pauline usage), so those who minister to them are uniformly described as prophets. And the seer of the Apocalypse counts himself also as a *προφήτης*.¹ The witness of this book thus entirely confirms our view of the important position which the 'prophet' occupied in the earliest Christian communities.

When we pass into the sub-apostolic age, the evidence as to the position of a 'prophet' is scanty and inconclusive. The local ministry of bishops and deacons was fully established at Corinth, and apparently at Rome, when Clement wrote his Epistle to the Corinthians (about the year 97); but Clement tells us nothing about Christian prophecy. In Asia Minor in the days of Ignatius the monarchical episcopate is fully organised, and the only hint of the prophetic office in his Epistles is in a passage where Ignatius speaks of the possibility of a direct revelation from God coming to him (*Eph.*, § 20), thus apparently regarding himself as a prophet.

The statements, however, of the *Didache* or 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles' seem at first sight to supply important testimony to the esteem in which the Christian prophets were held. It is usually supposed that this manual in its present form goes back to the year 120 or thereabouts. If this can be maintained, and if we may securely

¹ Rev. xxii. 9, 'thy brethren the prophets.'

accept the *Didache* as reflecting the Church life of the period when it was written, the inferences that may be drawn from its language are very significant.

Rules are laid down (§ 10-15) for the welcome to be accorded to an apostle—*i.e.* a missionary—or a prophet when he visited a little community of Christians. He is to be entertained for two days at most, but one asking to be fed and lodged for a longer time is to be regarded as a false prophet. So, too, if he asks for money as his reward, or if his conduct does not agree with his words, he is to be rejected. But a genuine prophet, speaking in the spirit, is to be treated with veneration, and his message is to be received without questioning. The injunction is added : ‘ Permit the apostles and prophets to offer thanksgiving as much as they desire ’ ; a rule which probably means (as will be seen if the context is examined) that the prophet is not bound to use the regular eucharistic prayers, but that he may pray *ex tempore*, as the phrase now is, at the celebration of the mysteries. And, finally, we have a hint of the gradual assumption of the prophetic office by the permanent officials of the Church : ‘ Appoint for yourselves therefore bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men who are meek and not lovers of money and also true and approved; for unto you they also perform the service of the prophets and teachers.’ Thus it would seem that

we should conceive of the development of the Church in the early part of the second century as marked by a gradual supersession of prophetic or itinerant ministry in favour of a local ministry of bishops and deacons, as ordinary gifts began to supersede those which are extraordinary.

These inferences have, however, been challenged by Dr. Armitage Robinson, the Dean of Wells, in a remarkable essay on the *Didache*.¹ The Dean points out certain features in this curious manual which suggest that it does not represent the life of the Church at any definite period, but that it is an artificial composition in which the writer sets down rules such as he supposes the Apostles might have enjoined. The prominence of the prophets in Acts and 1 Corinthians suggested to him the task of explaining how their ministry was carried on into the sub-apostolic age, and how it became merged in the official ministry, which is the only ministry of which Church history from the year 100 onward gives us any information. If the *Didache* be interpreted in this way, we cannot rely upon it as reflecting history.

Apart from the witness of the *Didache*, there is little trace of Christian prophets as notable personages in the life of the Church after the days of the Apostles. There are only two or three passages in

¹ *Journal of Theological Studies*, xiii. p. 339 ff.

the literature of the second century which need be mentioned ; but these agree in the main with the hints of the *Didache*, whatever its date.

In the *Shepherd of Hermas* (*Mand.* 11) the true prophet is contrasted with the false who is a mere impostor and wizard. As in the *Didache*, the false prophet may be detected by the inconsistency of his life, or by his willingness to take money for the exercise of his gift. But the *Shepherd* has nothing to tell of the special ministry of a genuine prophet ; and it seems a fair inference that at the time of its publication the prophetic ministry was not conspicuous in the Church of Rome.

In the apocalyptic section of the *Ascension of Isaiah*,¹ there is also a sentence which suggests the early disappearance of the 'prophet' from the Church's life. 'There will not be in those days many prophets, nor those who speak trustworthy words, save one here and there in divers places' (iii. 27). And Justin Martyr, writing about the middle of the second century, suggests that Christian prophets were rarely met with : 'Among us *even to the present day* are prophetic gifts,' he says.² Towards the close of the century, the ministry of prophets is only found among the Montanist heretics.³

¹ See p. 296 above.

² *Tryph.* 82.

³ See Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 16.

We have thus to recognise that (although his influence is probably exaggerated in the *Didache*) the prophet was a person held in peculiar estimation in the apostolic and sub-apostolic age. His gifts were those suitable to a period of transition and of spiritual revival, and when his work was accomplished he gave place to the official ministry of the Church whom we call bishops and deacons.

But the need for the prophet arises again and again in Christian history ; and he must be blind to its teachings who does not recognise that again and again the man has been sent to supply the need. Francis of Assisi, the prophet of unworldliness ; Savonarola, the prophet of liberty ; Luther, the prophet of the divine compassion, whose central thought is that of the love of God in Christ ; Wesley, Maurice, Newman, and all that goodly fellowship to whom it has been given by God to speak burning words of truth for Him—these men are indeed prophets to their age and to posterity of the manifold grace of God. And in every age of Christian history their mission has been the same as that of the first prophet of the gospel age—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. They go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways.

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